

Bridge challenge

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Leading article, P17



Protection racket

Has the badger now become a pest?
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Two for one flights

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Valerie Grove

Jack Dromey, proud father, even prouder husband, P15



EDUCATION

After the Harman row, let the real debate begin.
PAGE 33

Fight over language scuppers Ian Smith memoirs



Smith: "Zimbabwe is rotten to the core"

BY ANDREW PIERCE
THE long-awaited memoirs of Ian Smith, Rhodesia's last Prime Minister, have been dropped by a leading publisher because he says he insisted on describing his successor in Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, and his guerrilla army as terrorists.

But they are terrorists. They are nothing else. "I list the massacres. Thousands more blacks than whites were killed. What else can you call them but terrorists? They either publish my book in my words, in my writing, or they can find another author."

The autobiography, which was to have been published by HarperCollins late last year, has been edited by a professor of history at the University of Natal. But the repeated references to the "terrorist" activities of Mr Mugabe, and his Zanu (PF) party which has been in power since 1980, have proved too much for the publishers.

which would enable publication by the summer. "I want to have it published in London. It must be published. It is important for history and the record."

There are graphic accounts of behind-the-scenes arguments with Harold Wilson, the then British Prime Minister, during the protracted negotiations following UDI which led to inconclusive summit meetings aboard the British war-

ships *Tiger* and *Fearless*. The book makes no apologies for inflicting the economic sanctions and war upon Rhodesia. Mr Smith, a former Second World War RAF fighter pilot, maintained last night that the struggle to sustain UDI had strengthened the Rhodesian economy and left the new style Zimbabwe as the "Jewel of Africa".

Uproar over test failures by 11-year-olds

By JOHN O'LEARY AND PHILIP WEBSTER

TEST results showing that more than half of all 11-year-olds are not up to standard in English and mathematics provoked a storm over primary school teaching yesterday.

Tony Blair, branded the results appalling, John Major described them as disappointing, and education experts immediately used them to demand a return to more traditional teaching methods.

Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, denied that anything was seriously wrong with junior schools, but admitted that standards in English and maths were not good enough.

fect of four years of junior school teaching, and John Redwood called for a "value added" scale to measure children's progress through the system.

In the Commons, the figures sparked a fierce row over education standards, with Mr Blair blaming the results on 17

years of Conservative rule. These children were born under a Conservative Government, sent to school under a Conservative Government and educated under a Conservative Government. The failure is not theirs but the Conservative Government's," he said.

ing the tests in the first place and taunted Mr Blair over Harriet Harman's decision to send her son to a grammar school 14 miles away. If the Conservatives had failed, why had some of his frontbench colleagues taken their children away from Labour education authorities and had them schooled under Conservative ones, he demanded.

When Mr Blair angrily rose to his feet again to claim that Mr Major was focusing on Ms Harman's 11-year-old son "to conceal the damage they have done to millions", Mr Major retaliated with a string of statistics to defend the Tory record: more GCSE passes, more A level passes and more pupils going on to university.



Gillian Shephard, Education Secretary, denied yesterday that anything was seriously wrong with junior schools

longer she hangs on, the more demoralising it will be for the party," he said.

Away from the heat of Question Time, Mrs Shephard said that the 11-year-olds who took the tests last year had been held back by an overloaded curriculum, which was being slimmed down, giving teachers more time to concentrate on the basics.

But her Labour counterpart, David Blunkett, accused her of complacency and said the results exposed a crisis in the teaching of the basics.

on the accuracy of the latest tests and the Liberal Democrats' Don Foster described them as crude and simplistic.

Major assurance

John Major has written to John Bruton, the Irish Prime Minister, assuring him that he was not seeking to revive a Stormont-style assembly in which Unionists always had the whiphand. Mr Bruton had given a warning against unilateral action. Page 2

Hothouse valley

A plan has been unveiled to turn a Cornish valley into a world of rainforests, tropical gardens and desert under four giant hothouses, each of which will have its own climate. Page 5

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'Today' given out by radio cricket

By OUR DIARY STAFF

CRICKET is to bounce BBC Radio 4's flagship news programme *Today* from the early morning airwaves next month. Live coverage of the World Cup matches in India and Pakistan will replace the programme on Long Wave.

Protest groups are aiming hostile deliveries at the decision to broadcast *Today* — essential listening for the chattering classes and decision-makers — on FM only.

cy how to renew. The unprecedented situation has arisen because of the BBC's recent decision to put ball-by-ball cricket coverage on Radio 4 Long Wave instead of on Radio 5.

The BBC says that only two editions of *Today* are initially under threat. They coincide with England matches against Holland and South Africa on February 14 and 22. But if England proceed to the quarter finals, further editions could be at risk.

SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



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Jews told to shun reluctant divorce

By RUSSELL JENKINS AND ADRIAN LEE

AN unemployed computer analyst has become the first man in this country to be officially ostracised by the Jewish community over his refusal to divorce his wife.

The sanction, delivered by the Federation of Synagogues Beth Din, a Jewish court, will make Moses David, 43, of Watford Way, northwest London, a virtual *persona non grata* among Jews.

Jewish faith. Dr Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi, has been looking at ways to lift the 2,800-year-old religious law

Orthodox Jews are prohibited from eating, drinking or sitting within 6ft of him although they are allowed to talk to him. Further punishments, preventing his carrying out religious duties, may follow if he continues to disobey the court.

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هنا من الفصل

Blair receives education in vanity of pride

The trouble with Labour is that they start gloating before they've won. Premature triumphalism (the medical term is *exultatio praecox*) is common among politicians. It is thought to arise from wanting something so much that when it comes within reach, self-control is lost. The odious spectacle of a victor's enemies cheering the triumph of their triumph.

A famous example occurred at the Sheffield rally, days before Labour were (as they believed) to win the 1992 election. There was much punching the air and arriving in helicopters. "We'll be the judge of that," thought the

voters. It was only when Labour seemed on course to win that the voters resolved to knock them off it. Days before, in an excess of confidence, Shadow Chancellor John Smith had actually told them he was going to put up taxes.

Premature triumphalism has surfaced again more recently. With "new" Labour scoring a famous victory over Clause 4, and their party surging ahead in the polls, the Blairite modernisers begin to assume that the press will feed from their hands, that the public does not wish to know about gaps between preaching and practice, and that the "old" Parliamentary Labour Party can be herded around like sheep by Mr Blair's young

lads and Lassies. "Who cares," reason the modernisers, "where we send our children to school? Mind your own business." Mr Blair starts prefacing his answers to interviewers with a spoken "Look" and an unspoken "stupid".

Pride. Last weekend came the fall. By Tuesday Blair was in serious trouble at Prime Minister's Questions. Nobody, however, could call him faint-hearted: he has the opposite problem. On Wednesday he led an audacious fightback, knocking the sheep

into line behind him. That afternoon Harriet Harman carried all before her in a triumphant Commons performance.

All that word again. Did Mr Blair, offering up a prayer of thanks for his deliverance, resolve to tread a little more carefully for a while? Did he heed by yesterday morning, as he surveyed the "Blair crushes revolt" headlines, the Labour leader became super-confident.

His fightback was now unstoppable. Spitting at adversi-

ty, he would turn it into an advance. At PM's Questions he would actually choose Education for his attack on the Tories.

By no means was this forced on him. The first question was from a Labour backbencher, Barry Sheerman. Thus the PM could be steered off schools (Sheerman chose the CBI) leaving Blair, when he rose, with a free choice of subject.

If Blair had asked about cancer wards and Major had turned his reply to St Olave's school, the House would have felt demeaned, the PM wrong-footed. We would have groaned.

But Blair chose schools. Major could not believe his

Prince wins few allies in millennium call

Church leaders advised the Prince of Wales yesterday against pursuing a millennium crusade to build more churches and mosques. They said that with congregations falling there were enough empty pews. What was needed was a year of spiritual renewal.

Bishop Philip Pargeter, who represents the Roman Catholic Church on the National Millennium Commission, said: "We are much more concerned about looking after the needs of the poor than building a new cathedral. A spokesman for the Muslim Parliament of Great Britain said that their religion forbade them from accepting money raised by the National Lottery. The Millennium Commission insisted its proposals had a spiritual element."

Victims tested for drugs

Adults killed in road crashes will be tested for drugs from July because of fears that illegal abuse is one of the biggest single causes of serious traffic accidents. The three-year programme could lead to roadside police checks for drug abuse by early next century. Andrew Howard, AA head of road safety, said: "Drivers should remember any drug could have an adverse effect on driving ability."

Police pay £90,000

Clare Roberts, 31, a trainee solicitor, and two photographers, Malcolm Glover and Paul Demuth, both 40, were awarded more than £90,000 by police after alleging assault, false imprisonment and malicious prosecution following an incident when Mr Demuth emptied a tiny amount of cannabis from a matchbox in Soho. The Metropolitan Police denied liability.

Helicopter crash verdict

An RAF helicopter crash in which three teenage air cadets died was "completely unforeseen and unanticipated event", a coroner said yesterday. Dewi Pritchard-Jones recorded verdicts of accidental death on the victims of the crash, in August 1993, after a two-day inquest at Llandudno, Gwynedd. He praised the resourcefulness of the surviving cadet, Sarah Coker, 19. The three crew also survived.

Tarantula's lottery trick

As lottery fever sweeps Britain with a record double rollover jackpot exceeding £425 million expected this weekend, bizarre methods are being used to pick possible winning numbers. A lemur at London Zoo was given 49 numbered bananas to choose from, parrots have picked out numbered peanuts, and one man picked numbers by letting a tarantula crawl on his payslip.

Youth wins apology

Magistrates, lawyers and police have apologised to a teenager whose eight-month-old conviction for trespass was quashed when it was accepted that another youth had given his name and address. David Watson, 17, of Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, was convicted in his absence by North Shields Youth Court and fined £40 for trespassing on the Metro line. Police have promised an inquiry.

Jet took wrong path

A British Airways jumbo jet tried to land at an RAF base after mistaking it for an international airport three miles away, it emerged yesterday. The empty Boeing 747 was on a flight from Heathrow to BA's maintenance depot at Cardiff but took an incorrect path towards RAF St Athan. The incident came to light when the Air Accident Investigation Board confirmed that it had begun an inquiry.

Russian deal takes root

Gardeners will soon be able to buy seeds by mail order from the Russian Imperial collection at the St Petersburg Botanic Gardens through a deal struck with a British gardening club. The National Plant Club, based in Taunton, Somerset, said the collection, founded in 1714 by Peter the Great, would provide seeds of rare plants never before seen in the West.

Major moves to assure Bruton over assembly

JOHN MAJOR took action yesterday to heal a serious rift in Anglo-Irish relations caused by his backing for an elected body in Northern Ireland.

The Prime Minister wrote to John Bruton, the Irish Prime Minister, assuring him that he was not seeking to revive a Stormont-style assembly in which Unionists always had the whiphand.

The letter followed a warning from Mr Bruton against taking "unilateral action" and a claim by his deputy, Dick Spring, that Mr Major was going down a cul de sac. A senior Irish official accused Britain of throwing the Mitchell report "into the bin".

According to a ministerial source in Dublin, Mr Bruton had less than an hour's notice of Mr Major's challenge to Sinn Féin and the IRA on Wednesday to disarm or take part in elections. After two years of close co-operation between the two prime minis-

Labour highlights nationalist fears

LABOUR leaders yesterday distanced themselves from John Major's call for an elected body in Northern Ireland (Nicholas Wood writes).

In remarks that raised a question mark over the Opposition's staunchly bipartisan approach, Marjorie Mowlam, Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, highlighted nationalist fears that the body might herald a return to the days of unionist domination. In the Commons she told Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ire-

land Secretary, that the announcement had generated a "worrying air of distrust and a lack of confidence".

She asked him to allay those fears by making clear that movement towards such a body would go ahead only with the agreement of all parties. Her remarks came after John Hume, leader of the mainly nationalist SDLP, held a private meeting with Tony Blair to press his point that the Mitchell report was the way ahead.

London article, page 17

Grant children's school upset at MP's criticism

CRITICISM of his children's inner city comprehensive education by the Labour MP Bernie Grant drew an angry reaction from teachers at their school yesterday. Lionel Warne, head teacher, said the Tottenham MP had apologised for suggesting the school had failed his three sons.

White Hart Lane School, in Mr Grant's north London constituency, has the ninth worst academic record in the country, with 37 per cent of 16-year-olds failing to obtain a single GCSE last year.

Mr Grant is said to have told a parliamentary party meeting on Wednesday morning that he regretted sending his children to a local school. He criticised the standards of education in his constituency and across London, claiming it was a "disgrace".

Sharon Lawrence, his part-



Lionel Warne, head teacher of White Hart Lane, outside the school yesterday

Grant children's school upset at MP's criticism

By STAFF REPORTERS



Grant was said to be "talking generally"

ner and spokeswoman, yesterday denied reports that he had considered sending the boys to private school. "He's never involved the children in politics and he's certainly not going to now," she said.

"He was talking generally about inner city comprehensives and some of the serious

Divorcé

Continued from page 1 religious faith. The judgment, published by the court, states that Mr David, who belongs to a Sephardi synagogue in northwest London, was summoned to the federation three times at his former wife's request. He refused.

After the final summons in March 1995 he was given a warning that if he persisted in his refusal to comply with the courts, he would be formally placed in contempt, or *nidah*. Mrs David was authorised to publicise the punishment and seek the assistance of the civil courts.

Mrs David, a buyer for a medical equipment company, said: "As far as I am concerned my divorce in the civil courts means nothing to me. I was married through a religious ceremony and the only way I can get out is through my religion."

The case is highlighted in the *Jewish Chronicle* today. Dayan Berel Berkovitz, of the Federation, said that ostracism is the equivalent to contempt in a civil court. He said: "We have no means of enforcing this but religious Jews would tend to respect it. It is a very unusual step to take. It will go on until he purges his contempt."

Last year, Jewish women chained themselves to the offices of the Chief Rabbi as a protest against being trapped in marriages that the civil divorce courts have already declared are over.

Dr Julian Shindler, director of marriage authorisation in the Chief Rabbi's office, said: "The Chief Rabbi feels very strongly there are certain situations we cannot do very much about. At the very least we can show, at the communal level, our support for a woman who may be trapped in this situation."

Mr David was unavailable for comment last night.

Business backing for Blair vision

By JILL SHERMAN

THE Confederation of British Industry and two of Britain's biggest companies have given their backing to Labour's idea of a "stakeholder" economy.

Adair Turner, CBI director-general, said yesterday it was vital to ensure that a return to rising real incomes did not lead to a pay-price spiral. Rewards had to be linked to productivity and performance.

"It may sound like a statement of the blindingly obvious or some kind of mythical Utopia. But we must develop a framework giving employees opportunities, prospects and participation in the economy's success, dare I say, a stakeholding," Mr Turner said.

Sir Michael Perry, chairman of Unilever, says the group has developed the practice of giving employees having a stake in their companies over many years. In an article in *The Times* today, Sir Michael says he has no intention of "wandering far into the pre-election minefield of controversial social ideas" but he points out that "stakeholding" had a well-defined meaning in business theory.

Martin Taylor, chief executive of Barclays plc, welcomed Mr Blair's recognition of the importance of shareholding. Mr Taylor emphasised that a large proportion of the bank's employees already had a stake in the company. "I think the interesting thing about what Blair is saying is that he is accepting the enormous importance of shareholders."

Unions' welcome, page 26

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سكنا من الفصل

Tip-off foiled £30,000 demand

Ex-officer jailed for seeking bribe to 'noble' jury

BY CAROL MIDDLEY

A FORMER police sergeant with an exemplary career record was jailed for seven years yesterday for seeking a £30,000 bribe to help to noble an Old Bailey jury.

John Young, 45, was found guilty of attempting to pervert the course of justice after obtaining the home addresses of jurors in an attempt to influence the outcome of an armed robbery trial. He had denied the charge. Young, who was twice shot on duty and awarded the Queen's Gallantry medal while serving with the Metropolitan Police, showed no emotion as Judge Butler told him: "Conduct of this kind strikes at the very root of our criminal justice system."

Alan Rawley, QC, defending Young at Southwark Crown Court, said: "This is a ghastly and inglorious end to what had been certainly a distinguished and brave career and it is a matter of appalling record to see a man brought down like this." Joanna Korner, QC, for the prosecution, said that Young, who had left the force two years ago to become a private detective, had spotted the potential to make money while helping to protect jurors trying a kidnapping, robbery and firearms case last year. He was part of a team of police and private security officers giving 24-hour protection during the 11-week hearing. The case cost taxpayers an estimated £1.65 million. It involved



Young made bribery offer to robber's sister

four members of a gang nicknamed "The Professionals", including Wayne Black, 27, who escaped from a prison van during the trial in June last year. He was jailed for 20 years after his recapture. His three co-defendants were jailed for between 12 and 18 years.

The trial concerned a £200,000 jewellery raid and the planned robbery of a computer shop. The gang intended to strap a homemade bomb around the body of a shop manager but were arrested as they tried to kidnap her at her home.

Ms Korner said: "Regrettably the jury protection arrangements had the very opposite effect, because it enabled a corrupt police officer to obtain names and addresses of jurors and pass them on to someone who might have

an interest in influencing the jury.

She said that Young, of New Barn, Kent, approached the sister of one of the defendants, James Lawson, and offered to supply information for payment amounting to £30,000. He told Amanda Lawson that he could secure favourable verdicts.

He told her how the jury system worked and gave her the address of one of the jurors. Miss Lawson told her sister-in-law and her brother's solicitor what had happened before telling the police.

An officer calling himself Billy pretended to be a member of the Lawson family and spoke to Young on the telephone. A meeting between the two, at which a £25,000 payment was agreed, was secretly videotaped by other police officers.

A further meeting was arranged the next day outside a pub in Woolwich, southeast London, run by Young's co-defendant, Peter Ferrigno, 52. Young introduced Ferrigno, who handed over a sealed envelope containing the addresses of four more jurors. Ferrigno was cleared after telling the court that, although he believed something suspicious was going on, he did not know what was in the envelope.

Mr Rawley said that Young had been commended three times during the 1970s and was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal in 1974 after he continued to chase a gunman who had shot him in the leg.



Alfred Forte in Forte's of Berwick-upon-Tweed: a far cry from his second cousin's takeover battle with Granada

Café is northern outpost of family business that stays forever Forte

BY PAUL WILKINSON

THERE is one part of the Forte family empire that Granada failed to acquire in this week's £3.5 billion takeover. It is a small ice cream parlour and café tucked away in England's most northerly town.

Forte's of Berwick-upon-Tweed in Northumberland is owned by Sir Rocco's second cousin Albert, who yesterday said his 56-seat emporium was definitely not for sale. "I certainly don't think Granada have any plans to take us over, and with my son Remo running the business, the name is set to go on for quite a while." His chips-and-ice-cream es-

tablishment is a far cry from the catering and hotel chain the other branch of his family built up over 60 years. He said: "Sometimes people think we are part of the same group, but when they see the shop they realise we aren't."

Forte's was opened in 1921 by his father Carlo, 14 years before Sir Rocco's father Charles started his empire with a milk bar in Regent Street, London. Their businesses took spectacularly different courses. While Charles and Sir Rocco went on to own grandiose hotels such as the Savoy and Le Meridien in Paris, Carlo was content to sell cornets to tourists. Alfred, 68, who lives with

his wife Heather in a flat above the café, still relies on the summer visitors to swell his earnings. "I have never had any aspirations to be a big businessman," he said. "I have a comfortable living and that's good enough for me. It's a small family concern and that's the way it will stay."

He watched the boardroom battle from a distance. "It was interesting and I'm sorry Sir Rocco lost. I didn't have any shares. I was too poor to buy any. Selling ice cream in Berwick at this time of year is not the easiest way of making a living. "But all the interest in the takeover has certainly got the

family name in the paper and it's cheaper than buying advertising. Ours is such a small business compared to what Charles built up. I'd be sorry to see the Forte name go from the hotels, it helps us because people do make the connection."

The different branches of the family, which came originally from Italy, via Scotland, were once much closer. "The Fortes originally came from a village called Mortale, near Casino. It is now called Mon Forte, which is an honour, but more of a reflection of Charles's activities than ours, I think."

Shares' ride, page 21

Jury finds Nigerian was killed unlawfully

BY RICHARD FORD HOME CORRESPONDENT

A NIGERIAN asylum seeker who died after a struggle with police as he was arrested was unlawfully killed, an inquest jury decided yesterday.

Evidence given at the inquest into the death of Oluwasijibami Lapite is to be sent to the Crown Prosecution Service, which will reconsider whether charges can be brought against any police officer involved in the case.

His widow, Olanide, the mother of two children, aged one and three, is planning a civil action for damages against the Metropolitan Police.

Mr Lapite, 34, a painter and decorator, died from asphyxia and cardiac infarction after being put in a neck hold by police arresting him outside a club in Stoke Newington, northeast London, in December 1994. The pressure crushed Mr Lapite's voice box.

The jury's verdict, after a four-day hearing, was greeted with cheers from the public gallery at St Pancras Coroner's Court. Mrs Lapite, of Homerton, east London, said: "I heard how the officers beat and killed him and I am relieved my children are going to grow up knowing their father was unlawfully killed."

Earlier Dr Stephen Chan, the coroner, urged police forces in England and Wales to ban using neck holds to restrain suspects.

PC Paul Wright told the inquest that he and his colleague, PC Andrew McCallum, had feared for their lives as they struggled with Mr Lapite. However, the jury was told that Mr Lapite had 35 to 45 injuries on his body while the policemen were almost unscathed.

Waiter's father and imam accused over 'bride' of 13

BY BILL FROST

THE father of an unemployed Turkish waiter was charged yesterday with aiding him in the statutory rape of a 13-year-old British girl.

The imam who "married" Sarah Cooke and Musa Komeagac, 18, was also charged, with performing an illegal marriage.

The girl, who became besotted with the Turkish lothario on a family holiday, may be staying in his isolated village for another month following the adjournment of the court case against him last night. A judge told Komeagac that he must remain in jail until a special hearing on February 15. Miss Cooke and her mother, from Braintree, Essex, had been due to give evidence.

On Wednesday, after an application to the High Court by Essex Social Services, Miss Cooke was made a ward of court and ordered back to Britain "forthwith". Mrs Jackie Cooke, 37, flew to Turkey that day and publicly pleaded with her to return.

Yesterday the girl appeared willing to come home after writing a letter to her "husband" begging him to forget her because she was "being forced back to Britain". Later, according to Selim Sumen, Komeagac's lawyer, she had

"no intention of leaving". The lawyer said: "She does not want to go back to England. She loves Musa very much."

"I am arranging for them to meet in the prison over the next couple of days. She is looking forward to seeing him. He is very upset because he is away from her, but he is being well treated in prison. Everyone knows the story now. He has a lot of sympathy. The adjournment will give everyone a chance to study the implications. Sarah and her mother can have time to talk about her future. Sarah must make up her own mind. All anyone wants is what is best."

The girl and her mother spent part of the day at the basement flat occupied by the Komeagac family in the town of Kahramanmaraş, close to Turkey's south eastern border with Syria. After meeting Mr Sumen they were invited to the office of Ali Sezal, the mayor. He said: "I am proud that a British girl has chosen to live in our province and adopt our Islamic way of life. I will do everything I can to help them." He said he looked forward to performing a civil marriage ceremony with the couple, and he offered to provide them with a flat in which to start married life.

Old soldier takes leaf from tree protests

BY ADRIAN LEE

A FORMER sapper took a leaf out of the tactics book of anti-road protesters yesterday when he sat in the branches of a neighbour's beech tree in an attempt to prevent it being felled.

The incident began shortly before tree surgeons arrived in Hales, Norfolk, to cut down most of the 140-year-old tree. Philip Thirle, 77, who served in Burma, used a ladder to reach the lower branches. His protest seemed to have ended when he climbed down for a tea break and two constables removed his ladder.

However, Mr Thirle waited until the officers had left and resumed his protest 10ft above the ground. "The tree was there long before the neighbours built their bungalow four years ago," he said. "As far as I am concerned it is healthy with many years of life left."

Norfolk police were called again and Mr Thirle gave up his perch when he was threatened with arrest for breach of the peace.

Alan Wones, 25, Mr Thirle's neighbour, said: "We got advice that the tree is dangerous and had to come down. We do not want it falling down on our bungalow or conservatory."

Student died under lorry after relationship ended

BY JOANNA BLAIR

A STUDENT suffered fatal injuries when he "dived" under the wheels of a dustcart four days after his girlfriend ended their relationship, an inquest heard yesterday.

Ian Hyde received head injuries when he was hit by the lorry outside Christ Church, Oxford, and was dragged 40 yards along the road. Eleanor Blair saw him lying crushed beneath the wheels as she was walking to a lecture. He died three hours later in hospital.

Miss Blair, 20, a mathematics undergraduate, told the inquest that Mr Hyde, 19, a chemistry student, had gone to see her on the morning of November 9, four days after the couple had split up. The relationship had begun to falter at the beginning of their second year at Hertford College. She said: "I think he realised I did not feel the same way as I used to, but he did not really want to end it."

She said that on November 5 she had told him she wanted



Eleanor Blair saw Ian Hyde dying in the street

to part and he appeared to accept that. She added: "He later began to question what had been happening. On November 9 he came to my room. I was sitting on the bed having just finished writing a letter. He asked if he could read it. I said I would rather he did not, but he insisted. He left in a fairly upset mood."

She had expected to see him later in the day when they would be able to talk about the problem, but she next saw him as he lay dying in the road. John Clarke, the driver of

the dustcart, described how he had seen Mr Hyde. He said: "I got the impression that he was staring at me. As I drew level, I smiled at him. He took his eyes off me, looked at the wheel and aimed his head at it and dived. I felt a bump and felt him underneath as I was coming to a stop."

A post-mortem examination carried out at the John Radcliffe Hospital, disclosed that Mr Hyde, of Bredley, Hereford and Worcester, whose father had died in a road accident in 1994, had suffered multiple injuries and had died from head injuries. Mr Hyde's tutor, Dr Christopher Schofield, said he had been a good student with "no significant problems".

Recording an open verdict, Nicholas Gardiner, an Oxfordshire coroner, said Mr Hyde could have tripped and fallen into the path of the lorry. "It appears to me he was in a distraught state of mind. In this case I do not feel it would be proper to record a verdict that he took his own life."

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Genetic crops 'put country at risk'

By Nick Nuttall

STRICT controls to protect the countryside from genetically engineered crops were urged yesterday by a government adviser. Experts fear that crops bred to have novel properties, such as a long shelf-life, may cross-breed with wild plants with highly damaging effects.

Sir Crispin Tickell, chairman of the Panel on Sustainable Development and a former Ambassador to the United Nations, said: "We are playing not just with fire but with dynamite when you get into the field of biotechnology."

Speaking yesterday at the launch of the panel's second report, he said that there were many examples of scientific developments which had produced unforeseen environmental or health damage, including asbestos and CFCs.

The panel, set up by John Major after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, said principles on the release of genetically altered organisms should be drawn up with representatives from industry, science and medicine, charities and environmental and consumer groups.

MPs prepare to extend wildlife protection Farmers call for right to cull badgers in TB areas

By Michael Hornsby, Countryside Correspondent

FARMERS say they are being plagued by a rise in the badger population brought about by over-zealous concern for the animal's welfare. As MPs debate new legislation today that will extend the protection given to wild animals, farmers are calling for the right to resume the culling of badgers on their property.

For centuries the creature that supplied the gentle and fatherly companion of Ratty and Mole in Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows* was among the most persecuted of Britain's wild animals. Thousands were killed to make shaving brushes.

Now Old Brock is one of the most rigorously protected of animals. After being persecuted almost to extinction by landowners and gamekeepers in the 19th century, the badger population recovered steadily after the First World War as gamekeeping declined, but the animals were still seen to be under threat from culling by farmers and by the barbarous "sport" of badger digging.

The 1973 Badgers Act, prohibiting the killing or injuring of the animals, was designed to stop the persecution but was felt to be ineffective because it did not protect badgers' sets. This was remedied in a strengthened version of the

Act in 1991. The National Farmers' Union says badger numbers are now "unnaturally" high, particularly in the South West, and blames the animals for spreading disease to cattle, destroying crops and undermining pasture land. A recent editorial in *Country Life* suggested the law should be relaxed to allow measures to be taken to reduce populations in areas where the badger has become a pest.

The main complaint of farmers is that the animals are spreading TB to cattle. About a third of the estimated 250,000 badgers in Britain live in the South West, which also has the highest incidence of TB in both cattle and badgers.

Hugh Oliver-Bellasis, a Hampshire farmer who chairs an NFU working party monitoring the badger problem, said: "We are convinced that badgers are implicated in the spread of TB, which costs farmers about £4 million a year."

Scientists, however, have little sympathy for the farmers' case. Stephen Harris, professor of environmental sciences at Bristol University and a leading authority on badgers, said: "There is as yet no evidence of a sharp rise in badger numbers. We are carrying out a new census, but



Meale condemned "horrendous acts"

even if this reveals an increase it may only show how badly persecuted they were before. In any case there is no evidence that culling badgers would reduce TB in cattle.

The farmers' call comes as MPs appear likely to give overwhelming support today to a private member's Bill that would put wild animals on the same legal footing as pets and other domesticated or captive creatures. The Wild Mammals (Protection) Bill, which receives its second reading today, provides that anyone who "mutilates, kicks, beats, nails or otherwise impales, stabs, burns, stonks, crushes, drowns, drags or

asphyxiates any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering" shall be guilty of an offence punishable by up to six months in jail.

Alan Meale, the Labour MP who is sponsoring the Bill, said: "Nobody can believe it is right that people who commit the horrendous acts regularly witnessed by RSPCA inspectors, such as hedgehogs being kicked to death, hares impaled on spikes or foxes decapitated for fun, should escape prosecution."

An earlier version of the Bill last year was killed in the House of Lords by supporters of fox-hunting who raised so many objections that it ran out of parliamentary time. However, the latest Bill is being backed by the British Field Sports Society.

A list of exemptions makes clear that fox-hunting, deer-hunting, hare-coursing and falconry will still be lawful and that farmers will be allowed to continue shooting and trapping foxes, rabbits and other animals recognised as pests. Robin Hanbury-Tenison, chief executive of the society, said the Bill was a great step forward. "The society has always been prepared to support sensible animal welfare measures."



Badger and Mole in *Wind in the Willows*, written in 1908. The 19th century saw badgers persecuted almost to extinction by landowners and gamekeepers

Letters, page 17

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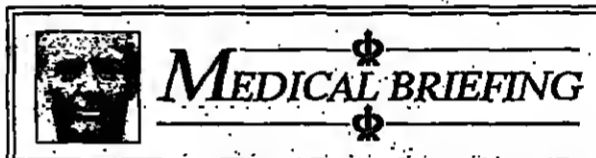
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Familiar voices offer no comfort



PERHAPS anyone who heard a warning from their father that a man behind them in the street was about to stab them might be expected to take drastic action.

The first patient I treated with auditory hallucinations, when I was a casualty officer, decided he must strike first — and badly beat a man innocently walking down a west London street.

The assailant, who suffered from schizophrenia, regularly heard his father, offering warnings and advice and commenting on his behaviour. The assault was thus not the fault of the patient, other than that he was not taking his prescribed treatment.

Since the large psychiatric hospitals were closed, and more patients released into the community, schizophrenia in general, and hallucinations in particular, are more frequently offered as a defence in court.

This development throws up two problems. It adds to the belief that all schizophrenics are dangerous, whereas the majority are frightened, timid people hiding in society's shadows. It also encourages a belief that all who have delusions are schizophrenic, whereas they can be a symptom of many psychiatric con-

ditions. Hallucinadon can affect any of the senses: auditory; olfactory; the smelling of strange smells; visual; the seeing of objects that are not there; or gustatory, the tasting of something when nothing is being eaten.

Extremely depressed or manic patients can suffer hallucinations. Voices may condemn them for their sins and promise damnation. Hallucinations can also be a symptom of alcoholism, brain damage, some forms of epilepsy or a side-effect of many drugs.

A case has been reported recently in the *British Journal of Clinical Practice* in which a woman who had a meningioma, a benign intracranial tumour affecting the right side of her brain, suffered visual, tactile and auditory hallucinations. Most she coped with, but the sound of church bells angered her. They became louder as the tumour grew.

She explained to her doctors that the irritation was not only because of the noise but because of the tune she heard. It was a well-known carol, and she, as an atheist, found its constant repetition offensive.

DR THOMAS STUTTFORD

Blue suppers offend fans of bawdy bard

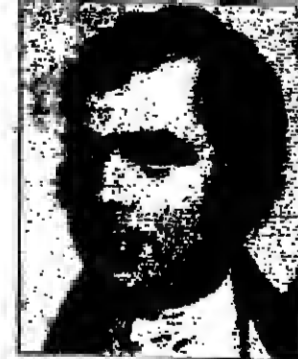
By Alan Hamilton

BAD language and jokes worthy only of a rugby club dinner are lowering the tone of the Immortal Memory, guardians of the heritage of Robert Burns said yesterday.

Speaking on the 237th anniversary of the poet's birth, and in the bicentenary year of his death, officials of the Burns Federation, which represents more than 1,000 clubs from Falkirk to Fiji, voiced concern that the Burns Supper, by tradition an encomium to the genius of Scotland's greatest son, was degenerating into an excuse for vulgarity and drunkenness.

Peter Westwood, honorary president of the Ayrshire-based federation and editor of its journal, the *Burns Chronicle*, said there had been an unfortunate tendency towards smut recently, particularly in the Toast to the Lassies, conducted after the spearing of the haggis.

"Dirty jokes about women are becoming too much of a feature of these events. We would accept it at an all-male supper but it seems to be on the increase in front of mixed audiences. Burns Suppers exist to honour the memory of a great man; they are not the occasion for distasteful jokes which can only cheapen the



Burns: forfeited to Olympic standard

occasion," Mr Westwood said. Two weeks ago, at a Scottish literature seminar in Glasgow, Murdo Morrison, the federation's president, appealed for Burns Suppers to be cleaned up and for speakers to concentrate on serious issues of the poet's work.

The man himself wrote some of the bawdiest poetry ever to kiss the printed page and drank and forfeited to Olympic standard during his brief life. The keepers of his memory nevertheless feel that his appetite for women — which he called hough-magandie — should not obscure higher instincts for lyric poetry and the rights of man.

On This Day, page 19

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Teachers misjudge pupils' ability

Girls outshine boys at all three levels in maths and English

REPORTS BY DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

GIRLS outshone boys in English and mathematics in tests at seven, 11 and 14, the first full set of results disclosed yesterday. Boys did slightly better in science but they showed worryingly low levels of achievement in English and mathematics from the age of seven onwards.

A marginal improvement was recorded over 1994 by seven-year-old boys in English, but mathematics grades deteriorated by 3 per cent. Boys fared worse in reading, spelling and handwriting — three of the four English disciplines.

Results from the first compulsory testing of 11-year-olds showed that only 43 per cent reached the standard expected of them in English, compared with 70.5 per cent for seven-year-olds. For 14-year-olds the figure rose just two points to 45 per cent.

A similar analysis of mathematics results shows 77 per cent of seven-year-old boys reaching the target for their age (national curriculum level two or above), compared with 44 per cent aged 11 and 57 per cent at 14.

Girls did considerably better at English at all ages, but their marks were slightly down on 1994 in every section of the tests. In English and mathematics at seven, girls did marginally worse, with 78 per cent and 81 per cent



McAvoy: criticised external marking

respectively getting average marks or above, compared to 80 and 84 per cent last time.

The figures published yesterday also include teachers' own assessment of pupils' progress alongside test results.

Teachers generally judged their pupils to be performing better than the results suggested, apart from in science. In English and maths, teachers judged that more than half of 11-year-olds matched Government expectations (56 and 54 per cent respectively). This was significantly higher than test results showed (48 and 44 per cent).

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, highlighted the

discrepancies and said external marking of the tests could explain some of the variations.

Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, said the first 11-year-old test results were still too problematic to be published in league tables of schools, as happens for GCSEs and A levels. However, parents could create their own tables by going to local education authorities to get information about schools in their area. "I would encourage authorities to make this information as widely available as they can," she said.

Ministers had assured teachers that yesterday's results would not be used to compile tables, but there has been a concerted campaign among Conservatives to use the tests to extend the information revolution to primary schools.

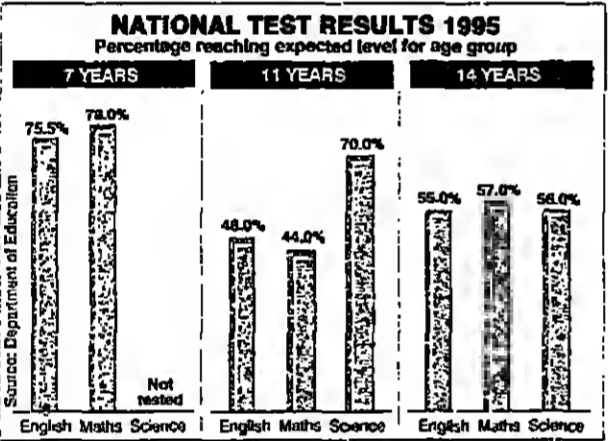
Mrs Shephard said that parents would receive their children's results and those of their school. She was waiting until the tests had "bedded down" before embarking on national league tables, and she would not commit herself to publication next year. Critics have accused her of delaying to avoid a confrontation with the unions, but she insisted the explanation lay in logistical problems.

Mrs Shephard said an improvement in results for seven and 14-year-olds showed how tests raised standards. The tests for 11-year-olds were being taken for the first time, and the children had suffered the effects of a previously overloaded curriculum, which had now been revised, she said.

"If you have had a problem at one age range in applying the old curriculum, you are bound to have an impact on what is being done in our schools and on results. That has been put right," she said.

Measures included a project for 20 centres to improve literacy and numeracy teaching.

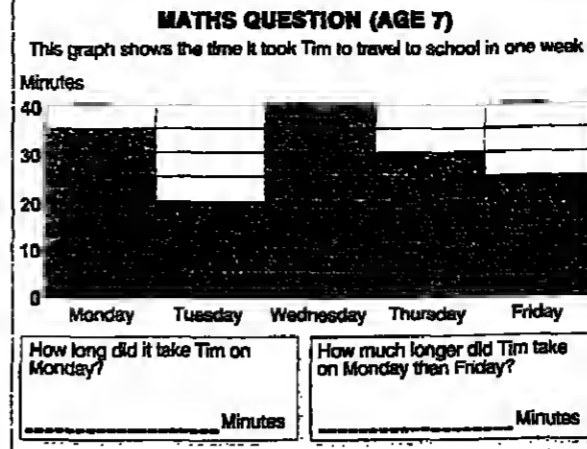
Education, page 33



TESTS AT SEVEN

English: spelling continued to be the weakest of the four tested areas, with 66 per cent matching or exceeding expectations for their age compared with 78 per cent for reading, 80 per cent for handwriting and 78 per cent for reading. Girls performed better in all areas, most notably in spelling, where 40 per cent of boys were already a year or more behind compared with 29 per cent of girls. Four out of ten girls were said to be reading at level three, the standard of an average nine-year-old.

Science: there were no tests in science but performance was assessed by teachers, who said 84 per cent of children reached or beat the targets set for the age group. There were only small differences between the abilities of boys and girls, with 14 per cent of female pupils reaching the average level of a nine-year-old against 15 per cent of the boys. The teachers assessed the seven-year-olds on their knowledge of materials and their properties as well as on physical processes such as heating and freezing.

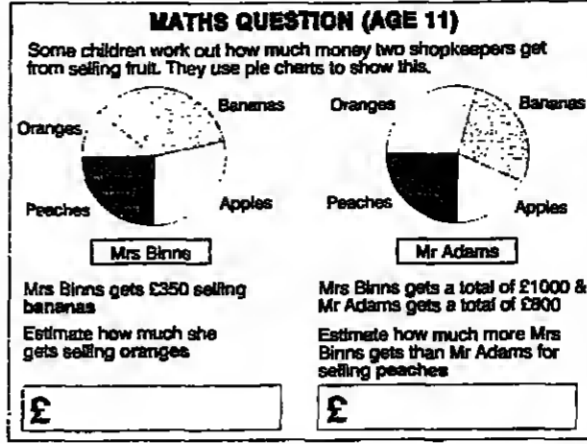


Mathematics: one in five seven-year-olds was shown by the tests to be as able as the average nine-year-old, but a similar number failed to reach the standard expected for their age. Boys formed the majority of the very bright and of the least able. Sixty-three per cent of girls and 56 per cent of boys were graded average. The tests concentrated on adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. Teacher assessment showed that 24 per cent of boys and 20 per cent of girls were below the target for algebra.

TESTS AT ELEVEN

English: half of the children who took English tests were below the standard expected of their age. Girls outshone the boys, with 56 per cent at or above the average compared with 42 per cent of boys. Pupils were tested on reading, writing, spelling and handwriting. Seven per cent were as good as the typical 14-year-old, but 8 per cent were four years behind the expected average. In teacher assessment, girls again excelled with 63 per cent judged at or above the average level, against 50 per cent of boys.

Science: results in science were by far the best of the three subjects, with seven out of ten children scoring average marks or above. Boys outperformed girls slightly and, overall, 22 per cent of pupils were judged to be at the standard of a 14-year-old. This year, however, the questions were harder. The tests covered life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. Teachers assessed their pupils at a lower level generally than the test results, saying 36 per cent were below average expectations.

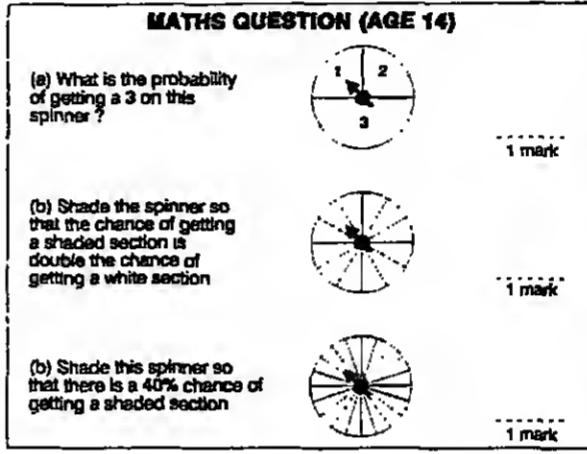


Mathematics: just 44 per cent of 11-year-olds achieved the standard expected of them in the tests, with 3 per cent four years or more behind. The tests covered numbers, algebra, shape and space and handling data. Extra time will be allowed for mathematics tests this year after complaints from teachers. In teacher assessment, 54 per cent of all children were said to be at or above the average standard of achievement for the age, with girls performing slightly better than boys.

TESTS AT FOURTEEN

English: fifty-five per cent of 14-year-olds scored at least average marks. However, 23 per cent were three years behind, 10 per cent five years behind and 4 per cent at least seven years behind the expected standard for their age group. Several hundred schools were unhappy with the grades awarded and demanded re-marking, which resulted in 4 per cent of pupils having their scores improved. Sixty-four per cent of girls were at or above the expected typical standard compared with 45 per cent of boys.

Science: boys did slightly better than girls in the science tests, with 57 per cent of boys judged at least average for their age compared with 54 per cent of girls. In all, 50 per cent were at the typical level of achievement, down from 64 per cent last year. Seven per cent were excellent in science, but 36 per cent were no better than the typical 11-year-old and 12 per cent of those were at or below a nine-year-old's performance. Pupils were tested on life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes.



Mathematics: one in ten 14-year-olds surpassed expected levels of achievement. Average grades were achieved by 57 per cent, with girls' marks slightly better than those for boys. More than a third were at the level of an average 11-year-old, and 14 per cent were able to match only a typical nine-year-old. Teachers assessed pupils' work at a slightly higher level overall, saying 61 per cent of 14-year-olds were at the average level or above, 10 per cent more than the 51 per cent of 14-year-olds were at the average level or above, in the previous year's tests. 60 per cent were judged average or above.

THE QUESTIONS

A BENCHMARK for future generations was set by the two million pupils who sat tests for 7, 11 and 14-year-olds last summer. In the English tests at seven, children read aloud a passage to their teacher. All children were asked to write a story using their best handwriting, and words in the spelling test included bus, hot bath, himself, pancake, missing and fighting. In maths at seven, children were

set worksheets to test basic arithmetic, each lasting 40 minutes. At 11, pupils sat two 35-minute maths tests with all questions in the form of problems to be solved, often relating to practical experiences familiar to pupils. Some questions did not allow use of a calculator. In science at 11 there were two 35-minute tests. One question asked which of a range of materials would melt, burn or stay the same if heated.

Both maths and science had 30-minute optional extension papers for higher-ability children. English tests for 11-year-olds included a comprehension test, with multiple-choice answers and longer answers requiring pupils to express feelings of characters. In the writing test they were judged on their purpose and organisation, grammar and style and a spelling test, including words such as gingerly

and illuminated. Mathematics and science tests for 14-year-olds both consisted of two one-hour papers, with extension papers for high-ability pupils. In English, 14-year-olds sat a 90-minute comprehension based on a letter from the Red Cross appealing for money and a story about someone being evacuated from their home as a refugee. The second English paper was a 75-minute test on Shakespeare.

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FLIGHTS - 31

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Poor performance of 11-year-olds highlights need for review of teaching methods

Results expose junior schools as weak link

The first results of tests at 11 confirm many of the anxieties long expressed by inspectors about standards in junior schools. No wonder that teachers have resisted national testing and continue to argue against the compilation of league tables. Gillian Shephard was careful to emphasise yesterday that this was the first year for the tests and that children had been studying under the old, overcrowded national curriculum. But there is no hiding the poverty of the results. Less than half of 11-year-olds reached expected levels in English and mathematics. The results are bad news for the Government, not least because they turn the spotlight away from Labour's troubles and back on to the condition of state schools. Seven years after the national curriculum was introduced to raise standards, the inescapable message is that junior schools in particular still display worrying weaknesses. Ofsted, the school inspection agency, found the quality of teaching to be unsatisfac-



Gillian Shephard may take credit for persuading schools to participate in curriculum tests, but she cannot hide from the poverty of the results, John O'Leary writes

tory in 30 per cent of junior school lessons last year. One school in ten was not making satisfactory progress in reading and a quarter were in the same position for writing. The 7-11 age group has been the weak link of the national curriculum. Teachers have had difficulty mastering the full range of ten subjects and, until last year's review by Sir Ron Dearing, were expected to cover an unrealistic amount of ground. But the deficiencies exposed in yesterday's results are not in obscure areas of the curriculum: they relate to English and mathematics, the building blocks of other learning. Mrs Shephard's proposed network of remedial centres to improve the teaching of basic

literacy and numeracy look more necessary than ever. But the results at seven suggest a secure grounding that fails to ensure lift-off. Another interpretation is that teachers of younger children have become adept at teaching to the tests in a way that junior schools have yet to grasp.

However, the results of the 11-year-olds will increase pressure for a rethink of teaching methods in the later years of primary education. Even Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, conceded yesterday that some of his members might have to think again about whole-class

teaching and other traditional methods.

Another overdue development may be to introduce more specialist teaching in junior schools, where the limitations of one teacher for all subjects are now fully exposed. The so-called Three Wise Men, who reported on primary schools to Kenneth Clarke in his time as Education Secretary, recommended just such a change, but little progress has been made.

The tests, decried yesterday as crude and simplistic, have been misrepresented by critics in the teaching unions and at Westminster. They bear no resemblance to the 11-plus and are not a Trojan horse for a Government bent on reintroducing selection. Not only are the national curriculum tests taken far too late in the school year to be used to select pupils, but they set out to test different things: the 11-plus is largely an IQ test, whereas the government tests measure progress through the curriculum.

Mrs Shephard was able to glory in the fact that, at all



Deficiencies exposed by the tests were not in obscure areas of the curriculum: less than half of 11-year-olds reached the expected levels in English and mathematics

ages, nine out of ten schools had carried out the tests and reported the results. Without her successful wooing of the teaching profession, the national picture would not have emerged. She was less con-

vincing on the question of when parents will be allowed to see comparisons of individual schools' performances. Local league tables, as the first objective measures on which to base choices between

primary schools, will be read avidly. The Government might want to avoid another stand-off before an election, but the bleak national picture will surely make parents even more impatient for the results.

TOMORROW



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PLUS
You could help to find Britain's best young scriptwriters as a judge of the Loyds Bank Channel 4 Film Challenge.

1015
inside the Magazine
ON SATURDAY

Vouchers may force nurseries to reduce costs

By DAVID CHARTER

LOCAL authority nursery schools might be damaged by the voucher scheme, the Audit Commission suggested in a report yesterday.

Not a single place at present provided in a free-standing nursery school, as opposed to those which are already part of primary schools, costs less than £1,100, the value of the vouchers being sent to parents in the four areas in a pilot scheme from Easter.

The commission looked at 11 of the country's 550 nursery schools. Its analysis of local authority provision showed that whereas half-day nursery classes in primary schools generally cost between £700 and £1,100, half-day nursery school places cost anything between £1,300 and £2,500.

If the findings were repeated across the country, they would suggest that costs would have to be cut at nursery schools under the voucher scheme, even if they attract parents. Local authorities now spend £1.4 billion on nursery or reception places for children aged three and four and the Government is to cut their funding by £565 million to pay for the voucher scheme.

The Government has said the scheme will encourage more local authority, private and voluntary provision of nursery places for four-year-

olds. But some areas have a way to go; there are places for just 26 per cent of four-year-olds in Hereford and Worcester, 27 per cent in Oxfordshire and 28 per cent in Essex.

The report says it is possible that parents who do not want to take up their child's nursery voucher place will try and sell the voucher. The scheme will distribute vouchers worth £750 million to parents to use at 40,000 nursery or play-group classes. "The scheme will need powerful procedures to prevent fraud. There could be potential for a black market," *Counting to Five* says.

The commission estimates the cost of setting up a part-time nursery class as £50,000. It says: "The high costs of nursery schools, particularly relative to nursery and reception classes, mean that the case for investing in new ones will seldom be compelling."

The report also says there is "considerable unmet demand" for nursery education, with up to 46 per cent of parents not receiving the type of service they want. It does not speculate on whether vouchers will help satisfy these demands.

The report says the main challenge for local authorities: once vouchers are issued nationally in Easter next year, is to maintain co-operation with other providers.

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This is the fifth day of our exciting new scratchcard game. Scratch off the numbers below on your Game 1 grid.

HOW TO WIN A PRIZE
If you reveal five identical symbols, for example five pairs of sunglasses, on your Game 1 grid any day this week, you will win a free flight for two with Virgin Atlantic. On the day you get your fifth symbol, you must claim your prize immediately by phoning our Accumulator hotline 0171-867 0406 between 9.30am and 3pm.

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Late claims will not be accepted for any of the prizes. Full details of how to play are on the card which you should have received with Monday's newspaper.

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You can also play our scratchcard game on the Internet. Simply call up the Web site (two addresses for *The Times* and Virgin are on your card). The numbers you should scratch off, which are different to those in your newspaper, will appear on your screen.

The same rules of how to play and how to claim apply, and the hotline numbers are the same for both newspaper and Internet games.

1 15

2 FOR 1 VIRGIN FLIGHTS - SEE PAGE 29

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Blair maintains big poll lead but his party's policies are slow to win public approval

Voters show loss of faith in Labour's readiness

By Peter Riddell

FEWER people believe that Labour is ready to form the next government than a year ago and the party is making only slow progress in winning approval for its policies, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

The poll confirms how central Tony Blair is to Labour's big lead in the polls and to the party's appeal to the middle classes. John Major has increased his personal popularity over the past year, but the public remains hostile to Tory policies.

Tory support is 29 per cent, up one point since early December and at the highest level for two years. Labour and the Liberal Democrats are unchanged over the month on 55 and 13 per cent respectively. The economic optimism index, measuring those who believe the general economic condition of the country will improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months, now

stands at minus 11 points. This compares with minus 16 points last month and is the most favourable level since last June.

A quarter of those questioned think the general election should be held immediately and a further third want an election during the course of this year. Just over a quarter of the public, but three fifths of Tory supporters, think that the election should be next year.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, shows that a clear majority believes that Labour is ready for Government and Mr Blair is ready to become the next Prime Minister, but the margins are smaller than when the question was last asked at the end of 1994. The biggest declines on both questions over the period have occurred among women, those aged over 55, skilled workers, and those living in the North.

In a week when the possibil-

ity of a Labour-Liberal Democrat partnership has been raised by Paddy Ashdown, the poll shows that a narrow majority of Liberal Democrats believe that Labour and Mr Blair are ready for government. Indeed, unlike the supporters of other parties, there has been an increase in the number of Liberal Democrats who believe that Mr Blair is ready to be Prime Minister.

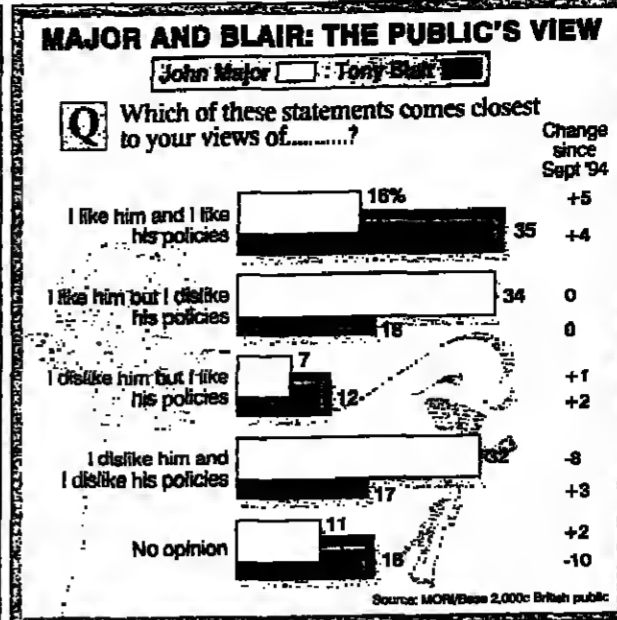
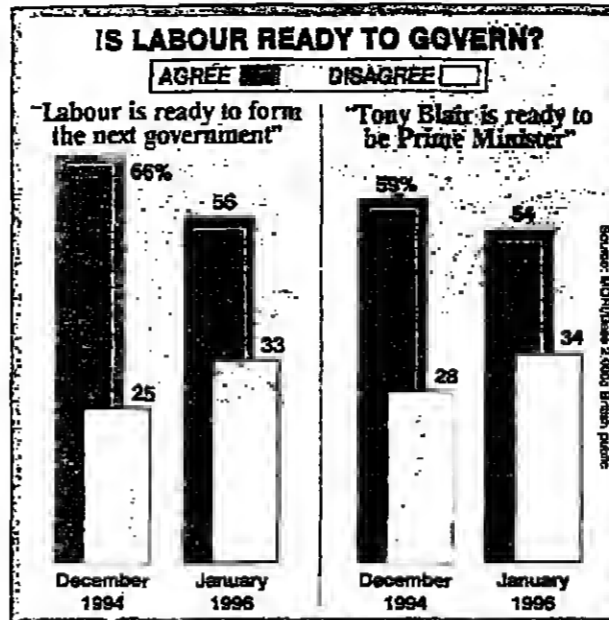
In December 1994, when Labour's poll ratings touched a record 61 per cent, the proportion agreeing that Labour is ready to form the next Government was 66 per cent. It has now dropped to 56 per cent. The number disagreeing has risen from 25 to 33 per cent over the same period.

Similarly, the proportion agreeing that Mr Blair is ready to be the next Prime Minister has declined from 59 to 54 per cent over the 13 months, while the number

disagreeing has risen from 28 to 34 per cent.

The poll underlines Mr Blair's personal appeal. Since September 1994, the number liking him has risen from 49 to 53 per cent. His appeal is as strong to the middle classes as to the working classes. He is liked slightly more by those who have switched to Labour since the last election than by party supporters generally. The number disliking him has also risen, from 24 to 29 per cent as the number with no opinion has declined.

The proportion of voters who like Labour's policies has increased slightly since September 1994, by six points to 47 per cent, but there has also been a small rise in the number disliking Mr Blair's policies, from 32 to 35 per cent. Overall, a third like Mr Blair and like his policies, while just under a fifth like him but dislike his policies. By contrast, while Mr Major is liked personally by half the public, Tory policies are disliked by two thirds. For example, the proportion liking Mr Major and his policies is half that for Mr Blair and his policies, while the number disliking Mr Major but liking his policies is double the level for Mr Blair and his policies. There has been an improvement since September 1994 in liking for Mr Major and for his policies, though the latter is from a very low level. The



Prime Minister is particularly liked by those aged over 65. Nearly two thirds even of those who have switched away from the Tories since the last election like him, compared with more than three quarters of Conservative loyalists. However, despite being personally liked, the public is still dissatisfied with the way he is doing his job as Prime Minister by a two to one margin. This has remained fairly level since last autumn. Three quar-

ters of the public also remain dissatisfied with the way the Government is running the country, with only one in seven satisfied. Mr Blair's personal rating remains positive, with nearly a half satisfied and just over a quarter dissatisfied. More than two thirds of Labour supporters are satisfied with one in eight dissatisfied. Mr Ashdown enjoys a positive rating among the public as a whole and particularly among Liberal Democrats. MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,770 adults at 135 ward sampling points across Britain. Interviews were conducted face-to-face from January 19 to 22. Data were weighted to match the profile of the population. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (10 per cent) or undecided (7 per cent) or refuse to name a party (3 per cent).

Notice to Customers

SAVINGS CERTIFICATES

National Savings Certificates of the 42nd Issue and 8th Index-linked Issue were withdrawn from sale on 25 January 1996.

The 43rd Issue will go on sale on 26 January. It will offer a guaranteed and tax-free return of 5.35% pa compound when held for five years.

The 9th Index-linked Issue will go on sale on 26 January. It will offer a guaranteed and tax-free return of 2.5% pa compound in addition to index-linking when held for five years.

CHILDREN'S BONUS BONDS

Issue G Children's Bonus Bonds were withdrawn from sale on 25 January 1996. Issue H will go on sale on 26 January. It will offer a guaranteed and tax-free return of 6.75% pa compound when held for the first five years.

CAPITAL BONDS

Series I Capital Bonds were withdrawn from sale on 25 January 1996. Series J will go on sale on 26 January. It will offer a gross return of 6.65% pa compound, guaranteed when held for five years.

PENSIONERS GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

Series 2 Pensioners Bonds were withdrawn from general sale on 25 January 1996 (but see the next paragraph). Series 3 will go on sale on 26 January. It will offer a guaranteed rate of 7.0% pa gross for the first five years held.

Series 2 Bonds will remain on sale for holders of National Savings Income Bonds who wish to use the proceeds of their Income Bonds to reinvest into Pensioners Bonds provided that:

- (a) the application to repay the Income Bonds was received at National Savings, Blackpool between 29 November 1995 and 25 January 1996 inclusive; and
- (b) the option to reinvest into Pensioners Bonds is exercised within 1 month of the repayment date of the Income Bonds.

FIRST OPTION BONDS

On and from 26 January 1996, the first year fixed rate on FIRST Option Bonds will be 6.25% gross (5.0% net assuming tax at 20%). Bonds of £20,000 or more held to the first anniversary will earn a bonus of 0.25% gross (0.2% net).

DEPOSIT BONDS no longer on sale. On and from 9 March 1996 the variable rate of interest will be 6.25% pa gross.

Sales booklets (including application forms) are available from post offices. Alternatively you can get copies by telephoning 0500 500 000.

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Issued by the Department for National Savings, on behalf of the Treasury

INCOME BONDS

On and from 9 March 1996 the variable ("Treasury") rate of interest payable on Income Bonds will be 6.25% pa gross. The bonus on holdings of £25,000 or more remains at 0.25% pa gross. The gross rates from 9 March will therefore be as follows:

Holding	Rate of interest
under £25,000	6.25% pa
£25,000 and over	6.5% pa

INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

On and from 9 February 1996 the variable gross rates of interest on deposits in an Investment Account will be as follows:

Balance in account	Rate of interest
under £500	5.0% pa
£500 to £24,999	5.5% pa
£25,000 and over	5.75% pa

ORDINARY ACCOUNT

On and from 1 March 1996 the variable rates of interest on deposits in an Ordinary Account will be as follows:

Standard rate	Higher rate
1.75% pa	2.75% pa

PREMIUM BONDS

On and from 1 May 1996 the variable interest rate used to calculate the prize fund will be 4.75% pa. At the same time, a new scale of prizes will be introduced. This will fix the number of prizes at 350,000 a month. The prize values will continue to range from £50 to the £1 million monthly jackpot, but there will be a new method of calculating the number of prizes of each value. The number of larger prizes, after the £1 million jackpot, will no longer be fixed at 44 a month but will grow as the prize fund grows. The new method will result in about double the current number of prizes in the range £5,000 to £100,000. There will also be more prizes of £500 and £1,000. Full details of how the prize fund will be allocated were published in the London, Edinburgh and Belfast Gazettes dated 26 January 1996. They will also be included in a new booklet expected to be available at post offices from 11 March.

Tories' meagre recovery worth only half a cheer

The voting intention figures don't matter yet. What matters is whether we are getting our message across." So said a senior Shadow Cabinet member after the latest MORI poll for *The Times*. He is partly right. As revealing are the pointers to underlying attitudes shown by replies to other questions.

The slight recovery in the Tories' rating should therefore be greeted with only a half a cheer in Conservative Central Office. The improvement in the economic optimism index may be a forerunner of a revival in the elusive "feel-good" factor. But the change is small so far and there has been no sign of any reduction in the high level of public dissatisfaction with the Government.

John Major is liked by the public, even by those who dislike his policies and are dissatisfied with his performance as Prime Minister. His rating of plus 11 points on "like less dislike" contrasts with minus 39 points on "satisfied less dissatisfied". Despite its big overall lead, there are warning signals for Labour in the decline in the number believing Labour is ready to govern and Mr Blair is ready to be Prime Minister, particularly among the key groups of skilled workers which Labour wants to attract from the Tories.

Overall, the poll confirms the view of Robert Worcester of MORI that "the outcome of the next election will depend upon how well Mr Blair performs and how well he keeps the Labour party together". Mr Blair is clearly the



party's big asset, enjoying particularly high ratings among those who have switched to Labour since 1992 and among Liberal Democrats. Not only is he liked but he enjoys strong public support for his performance as Labour leader.

Mr Blair's favourable rating is not, however, matched by equal enthusiasm for Labour policies. Since September 1994 there has only been a tiny rise in the number who "like less dislike" his policies. None of that surprises Labour strategists whose research has revealed considerable public uncertainty about party policy. That explains the desire to project the stakeholding society as the party's "unifying theme" or Big Idea. This has gone down well, but after the Harriet Harman row this week, party leaders recognise the need to flesh out policy themes.

The Tories' conclusion is that they need to hammer home the story of an improving economy and what is being dubbed the "hypocrisy" theme, the contrast between what Labour leaders say and do.

The most significant message of the polls this year will be how these campaigns affect the public's view of, for example, the parties' degree of unity, readiness to govern and leaders' performance. These will in turn determine voting intentions on polling day.

PETER RIDDELL

Soundbite factory starts production

By James Landale, Political Reporter

TONY BLAIR continued his drive to modernise the Labour Party yesterday with the opening of a new media centre.

The £2 million offices near Westminster will be the nerve centre of the general election campaign. Dubbed "the soundbite factory", it will house a workforce of spin-doctors, press officers and campaign officials.

After the last election, many Labour officials felt that the party's campaign had been too fragmented. With all the staff under one roof, the new centre will help to enable more co-ordinated and disciplined approach. Some Labour MPs, however, fear that the move will allow Mr Blair's aides to sideline the national party headquarters at Watworth Road, south London.

About 130 people will work at the offices in the Millbank Tower, five minutes walk from the Commons. Labour has leased two floors of the modernist block from the Legal & General insurance company.

On the ground floor, a former cinema auditorium has been turned into a modern 130-seat press conference theatre. Brimming with new technology, the offices are connected by fibre-optic cable to the nearby television offices, from where the pictures can be sent around the world. The

offices are also on the Internet. Excited officials spoke of "actually beaming Tony in and out of here - live!"

On the first floor is the campaigns centre where press officers, researchers, administrators and policy staff will work. The office will also contain a massive computer database called Excalibur.

Material ranging from speeches by Tony ministers and the Shadow Cabinet to Labour policy documents will be stored on the database to help the party's "instant rebuttal unit". Officials aim to counter immediately any false accusations or misquotations made by the Tories.

Mr Blair told party workers yesterday that the centre would help to get Labour's message across. "We have never believed that the message is a substitute for substance, but it is important that they go together," he said.

IN PARLIAMENT

YESTERDAY in the Commons: questions to Northern Ireland ministers and the Prime Minister; Finance Bill, committee stage; Health Service Commissioners (Amendment) Bill, committee stage; In the Lords: Family Law Bill, committee stage; International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (Immunities and Privileges) Order.

TODAY in the Commons: Who Merges (Protection) Bill, second reading; Employment (Home Workers) Bill, second reading; Offensive Weapons Bill, second reading; The House of Lords is not sitting.

صكرا من الامم

Media circus homes in on Whitewater hearing

First Lady braces herself for grand jury questions

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

HILLARY CLINTON'S arrival at a federal court this afternoon will generate an excitement on Pennsylvania Avenue unmatched since she and her husband passed by the ornate building on their way to the White House after President Clinton's inauguration in 1993.

On that occasion, joyful Democrats thronged the pavements. Today, it will be battalions of national and international media gathered to witness the unprecedented sight of America's proud, self-righteous First Lady arriving under subpoena to testify before a grand jury that smells an obstruction of justice.

Mrs Clinton was yesterday campaigning in New Hampshire, putting a brave face on her predicament, but her appearance will be a humiliating ordeal. Her lawyers understandably spent two days trying to persuade Kenneth Starr, the Whitewater special prosecutor, to retract the sub-

poena after the grand jury issued it last Friday.

On three previous occasions Mr Starr, in deference to Mrs Clinton's position, had gone to the White House private quarters genteelly to question her and the President about Whitewater matters. This time the prosecutor, outraged by the sudden "discovery" in the White House residence of key documents he had subpoenaed two years ago, was determined to demonstrate he would not be trifled with.

Mrs Clinton has the option of slipping into the court through its secure underground car park, but aides predicted she would choose to march in through its front door with her head held high.

Once inside she will take the lift to the third floor, where yet more journalists will be gathered. At that point the First Lady must leave behind her lawyers, Secret Service agents and all other trappings of office and enter the drab and

windowless jury room alone. Mrs Clinton will sit in a wooden chair before 23 jurors, randomly selected citizens of Washington who are each paid \$40 (£26.50) daily. The only other people present will be a federal marshal, a stenographer and either Mr Starr or one of his team.

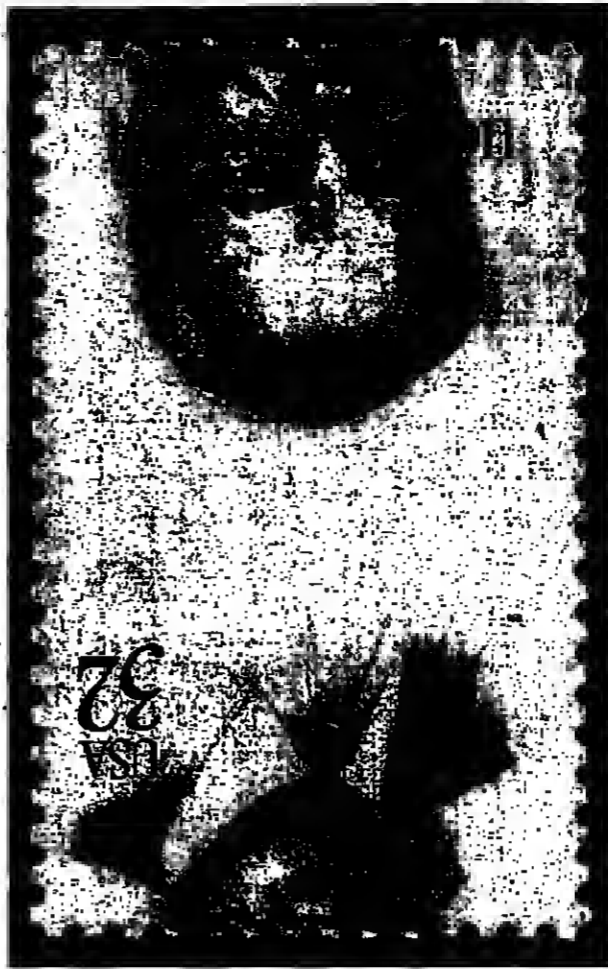
The jury foreman will swear Mrs Clinton in. The prosecutor and jury will then grill her about the mysterious disappearance and reappearance of the documents — records of her legal work in the mid-1980s for the corrupt Arkansas bank at the heart of the Whitewater affair. If Mrs Clinton needs to consult her lawyer, David Kendall, she must leave the room.

A grand jury's job is to determine whether evidence should give rise to formal charges or "indictments". Mrs Clinton is still technically a witness, not a "target" of Mr Starr's investigation, and could be out of the court in

minutes. Conversely, the hearing could last hours or even days, and Mrs Clinton risks perjury charges if she appears evasive or seeks to claim she cannot remember key events.

Her testimony must also accord with that of five other subpoenaed White House aides, including her clothing and make-up assistant, her lawyers and an usher. She has the right to invoke the Fifth Amendment against self-incrimination, but that would be political suicide.

Twelve of a grand jury's 23 jurors must vote to indict. The White House will be aware that this jury is drawn from a staunchly Democratic city, but also that Mr Starr is a Republican who served in both the Reagan and Bush Administrations and can make recommendations to the jurors. It still seems unlikely that the First Lady will be indicted, but if she were America would enter uncharted political and constitutional territory.



Spectacular errors on the 32-cent stamps honouring former US President Richard Nixon have made an anonymous Virginia man happy. He bought 160 of the flawed stamps that aroused little interest elsewhere — until the discovery of the error. Now each is said to be worth \$8,000 (£5,333)

Author brings rail company to book in court

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

JOHN GRISHAM, the internationally acclaimed author, has triumphed on his first return to the courtroom since becoming a full-time writer by winning \$683,500 (£453,000) for his client.

Mr Grisham did not deny that he had found the experience frightening, but said it may have provided him with a plot for his next courthouse novel.

He worked as a lawyer in Jackson, Mississippi before realising he could make millions from his books. The author was representing the widow of a railway brakeman who was crushed to death in a train crash. She was the last client he accepted before he became a full-time writer, but her case against her late husband's employer took years to come to court. Mr Grisham, who has sold more than six million books with titles such as *The Firm* and *A Time To Kill*, had felt duty-bound to continue representing her.

The damages awarded to her were, he said in his

southern drawl, the "biggest verdict I've ever gotten". The size of the award also surprised local observers. "Our juries are normally very conservative," Sheriff Lynn Boyce said. "They just don't hand out large settlements."

The author convinced the jury in the small Mississippi town of Brookhaven that Illinois Central Railroad, which operated the track, was responsible for the death of John King four years ago.

Aspects of the tale of King, his death in a lonely siding and the apparently big, bad railroad company which failed to offer his widow proper compensation, could have come straight from the pages of a Grisham blockbuster.

He interrupted his writing schedule to take part in the court case, and after the verdict he conceded that the proceedings had provided him with some useful material. "Everything is grist," he said. His next book, strangely, has the hint of a rail theme. Its title: *Runaway Jury*.

Republicans offer to end budget deadlock

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

IN THE first sign of a breakthrough in Washington's political gridlock, Republican leaders said they would abandon the national debt as a weapon against President Clinton if he backed modest budget and tax cuts as a "down payment" on a balanced budget.

The move, by which congressional leaders appeared to close the door this year on plans to reduce the size of government and eliminate the deficit within seven years, was seen as a possible

defeat for hardline Republican freshmen and a direct result of Mr Clinton's State of the Union performance.

White House aides met opposite numbers on Capitol Hill yesterday to discuss a possible agreement which would, in effect, keep the federal Government from its third closure today but retain the balanced budget as the key presidential election issue.

President Clinton and his Treasury Secretary, Robert Rubin, were "pleased" the deal would allow the American debt to be raised beyond its \$4.9 trillion limit, averting a possible national default.



O.J. Simpson prepares for his cable TV interview

OJ plugs his video and attacks media in live TV interview

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

IN HIS first full-length interview since being acquitted of double murder, O.J. Simpson attacked the media for their coverage of the case and asked critics to leave him alone.

Mr Simpson, who appeared for an hour on Black Entertainment, an American cable television channel, repeated his denial that he killed his former wife, Nicole, and her friend, Ronald Goldman. "I did not commit those murders," he said. "I couldn't kill anyone and I don't know of anyone who was involved." He said his trial had been "gruelling" and "horrible", and that for the past 16 months he had taken sleeping pills nightly.

The live interview was watched by a large audience. Early reactions suggested that it had not answered many questions or repaired the damage the case had done to race relations.

The former American football star said that the public had been "led to" by the media. "I think the media is the main reason why America is feeling the way it's feeling," he said. Continuing media presence meant that he was no longer able to pet his dog without photographers leaping over his fence and taking pictures, which would later appear under accusations that he was "arrogantly" flaunting his freedom.

The only time Mr Simpson seemed to lose his temper was when questioned about his golf-playing habits, which have been used as an example of his carefree existence. He replied indignantly that he had played golf only twice since returning to his home. When his interviewer, Ed

Gordon, asked if it might be a good idea if he moved out of Los Angeles for a while, Mr Simpson replied angrily that he had lived there longer than many other residents.

Several times he mentioned the \$29.95 (£19.60) videotape interview he has made. His contract with the manufacturer of the tape, he said, prevented him from discussing certain elements of his story, while his continuing civil legal fight with the family of Ronald Goldman meant he could not talk about the evidence.

Mr Simpson said he had compassion for Goldman's father, Fred, who has been his most constant critic, but added that another side was "very angry" with him.

Mr Simpson, who admitted he once resorted to physical violence against his former wife, felt he had been unfairly cast as a misogynist by "a certain group of women". In an infelicitous choice of words, he said: "I have become their whipping boy."

He said he and his wife had remained friends despite the occasional rows and she would consult him when she needed personal advice. He would "grieve for the rest of my life" for Nicole and was hiring investigators to search for her killer.

Despite his generally smooth demeanour, Mr Simpson did not appear to have succeeded in winning over critics. Andrea Peyser, a columnist in the *New York Post* yesterday called Mr Simpson "a whiner and a bore". Many callers to radio stations and television shows criticised him for plugging his video, although others felt it was time he was left alone.

OR SIMPLY, THE CASE IN FAVOUR OF ROADS IN GENERAL. THE ORIGINAL 155 HAS BEEN BREATHTAKINGLY REVAMPED WITH WIDER FRONT AND REAR WINGS. NOTICE ITS WRAPAROUND REAR SPOILER, BODY COLOURED PAINTED SKIRTS AND 16" ALLOY WHEELS. THE 155 IS POWERED BY A 2.0 TWIN-SPARK 16V ENGINE. IT COMES WITH LEATHER STEERING WHEEL AND BODY-HUGGING SPORTS SEATS. IT'S A CAR THAT DEFINITELY MAKES DRIVING BETTER THAN ARRIVING. GO ROUND TO YOUR NEAREST DEALER FOR A TEST DRIVE OR RING 0300 718 000. WE'RE NOT AGAINST THE ENVIRONMENT. WE'RE ALL FOR GETTING MORE PEOPLE OUT INTO IT.

ALFA 155. THE CASE IN FAVOUR OF MORE ROADS.

SELENIA MOTOR OIL 3-YEAR ALFACARE

CAR FEATURED IS A 2.0 TWIN SPARK 16 VALVE WITH OPTIONAL SPORTS KIT.

سكيا من السفر

Nato commander shuns Serb leaders over war atrocities

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE two key Serb figures who played such a prominent role in prolonging the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina are now being shunned and ignored by all Nato commanders engaged in implementing the Dayton peace accord.

Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb leader, and General Ratko Mladic, the Serb army commander, both wanted for alleged war crimes, have not dared to show their faces when Nato commanders have visited Pale, the Serb stronghold, for fear of arrest.

However, Admiral Leighton Smith, the Nato commander in Bosnia, disclosed yesterday that both men had tried to arrange meetings with him, but on each occasion he had ignored their requests.

He said Dr Karadzic had sent him a letter inviting him to lunch and General Mladic had passed on messages to arrange a meeting. "I didn't reply to the lunch invitation and I ignored the messages," Admiral Smith said on a brief visit to London.

The American admiral who is in charge of the 60,000-strong Nato-led Implementation Force (Ifor), underlined the agreed policy that the troops under his command would not go seeking indicted

war criminals. But he made it clear he would have nothing to do with either Dr Karadzic or General Mladic.

He said if they had appeared when he visited Pale on December 26 he would have left immediately. Asked if he would have tried to detain them, he said he only had eight security personnel with him and there were up to 2,000 Serb soldiers around. "I'm not stupid," he said.

Since the arrival of Nato troops in Bosnia, the peace implementation mission had largely gone according to schedule and Admiral Smith was confident that the operation would be completed within the timescale of 12 months. However, he gave a warning against false expectations and said he was determined to avoid "mission creep", in which Ifor troops took on responsibilities not covered by the Dayton agreement.

The most sensitive issue for Admiral Smith has been the demand for Ifor troops to guard suspected mass graves containing victims of alleged Serb massacres. Although he has offered assistance to the United Nations war crimes tribunal, he underlined his reluctance to get involved in deploying troops to guard all

the suspected sites. He said he would need hundreds more soldiers for such an operation, as many of the 60,000 Nato troops were involved in support areas.

He said there were between 200 and 300 mass burial sites, about 20 of which were within the designated zones of separation between the former warring factions. The open-cast mines at Ljubija between Sanski Most and Prijedor in northwest Bosnia, where thousands of bodies are alleged to be buried, were "two kilometres by two kilometres", Admiral Smith said and would be impossible to guard without extra troops.

While pleased with the way the former warring factions had complied with most of the conditions, Admiral Smith said the failure to hand over all prisoners was an "abominable". His forces remained at two hours' notice to help with the release of prisoners.

He also said it was vital that the UN plan to send more than 1,700 civilian police to Bosnia should be implemented as soon as possible. So far only about 80 had arrived.

It was not up to Ifor troops to act as policemen. "We cannot make Bosnia a crime-free state," he said.



Crack squad: Dutch firemen try to free a grebe stuck in ice in Roermond as cold weather struck northern Europe

Lisbon raises hope of East Timor deal

By DAVID WATTS

THE election of a new Portuguese Government appears to have opened the way to the solution of a problem half a world away. Indonesia believes prospects for settlement of the East Timor dispute are improving after the first meeting between Ali Alatas, the Foreign Minister, and Jaime Gama, his new Portuguese counterpart, in London.

"Gama is a person who is open and sincere in his desire to find a way out of this problem," Mr Alatas told *The Times*. The new atmosphere augurs well for more talks later in Geneva. But, with resistance continuing, the fundamentals of the 20-year-old dispute remain much the same, despite new support for Jakarta from Australia through a security treaty.

The United Nations regards the territory as remaining under Portuguese administration. Mr Alatas said: "The Portuguese decolonisation process went wrong, as it went wrong in Angola and Mozambique. It happened in the middle of a civil war that they had created... But the difference with Angola and Mozambique was that in their cases the Portuguese recognised that a self-determination process had taken place. With East Timor, that did not happen."

Pressure grows for nuclear arms ban

FROM PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA

NON-ALIGNED countries are challenging superpower domination of the 38-nation Disarmament Conference by insisting on a start to talks on full nuclear disarmament this year. The move could hinder a push by Western powers and Russia towards a nuclear test ban treaty.

As the conference began its 1996 session, India insisted that it would only accept a conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty if it is linked to negotiations to eliminate all nuclear weapons.

Twenty-one other non-aligned countries also criticised the big powers for failing to take the step, but they stopped short of openly linking it to a test ban.

The Indian position cast aside the usual evasive, and sometimes obscure, discourse reserved for negotiations and caught officials by surprise. They said earlier that they believed none of the countries in the talks would dare to be seen to be holding up moves to outlaw nuclear test explosions by September.

John Holm, director of the US Arms Control Agency, said bilateral talks were a better place for disarmament negotiations than the conference.

Negotiators still have more than 1,200 disputed pieces of text to iron out.

Russians fear 'spy' backlash by Poles

By ROGER BOYES

AFTER the ousting of Jozef Oleksy, the Prime Minister, Poland yesterday faced its worst political crisis since the 1989 Solidarity takeover. Russia was the first to sense the move's seriousness, warning Warsaw against launching an anti-Moscow policy after spying accusations against Mr Oleksy.

The resignation of Mr Oleksy — accused of handing secrets to a KGB colonel — may affect Poland's passage towards Nato membership. And it could signal the splintering of the former Communist Party, now dominating parliament, occupying the premiership and presidency.

The military prosecutor triggered the crisis late on Wednesday by announcing there was sufficient evidence to investigate spying claims against Mr Oleksy. The Prime Minister stepped down, swearing: "I declare I have never betrayed Poland — I never harmed my fatherland."

The dossier against him is said to contain transcripts of telephone conversations with a neighbour — a Russian diplomat — a video of a rendezvous with another Russian diplomat, and testimony from bodyguards who served Mr Oleksy when he was Speaker.

Mr Oleksy claims the friendship with the Russians was innocent. The main Russian involved — now a businessman based in Moscow — says they were just good friends. But the military prosecutor appears to have material that compromises not only Mr Oleksy but also other members of the former Communist Party, now the Social Democrats.

The Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Sergei Krylov, gave a warning yesterday that the Polish investigation should not start a witch hunt against former Communists or mark the beginning of a crusade against Russia.

Files against Mr Oleksy were released by the outgoing Interior Minister before Lech Walesa stepped down as President last month. Mr Walesa has called for early elections and hopes to lead a united Solidarity back to power.

WORLD SUMMARY

American culture too costly

Paris: The American Centre in Paris, a showcase for the country's culture for more than 60 years, is closing because of financial problems, it was announced yesterday. Founded in 1931, it moved to plush new £27 million premises in the Bercy, inaugurated by Hillary Clinton, in 1994. The doors will close on February 12 and the 23 staff employed by the centre, which did not receive government funds, will be made redundant. The building will be sold.

Cultural events will still be organised, but in collaboration with other venues in the French capital. (AFP)

PanAm set for take off again

New York: PanAm, the once great American airline that fell victim to the Lockerbie bomb and went bust in 1991, is to be relaunched (Quentin Letts writes). Martin Shugue and Charles Cobb, a former US Ambassador to Iceland who bought the PanAm trademark for \$961,000 in 1993, hope to start flights this summer, initially serving the US market. The airline was originally formed in 1927.

Mediators fail to free Britons

Jakarta: Two missionaries met the Irian Jaya rebels who are holding 13 people, including four Britons, in their jungle camp, but could not persuade them to free any of the hostages. Indonesian military officials said. The rebels want autonomy for the province and withdrawal of troops. (AP)

Snack attack

New York: The US Food and Drug Administration has approved an oil substitute that could sharply reduce the calorie level of snack foods (Quentin Letts writes). But some health groups say olestra may cause diarrhoea and wash vital nutrients out of the body.

Greeks defend islet

Athens: Greek warships patrolled the eastern Aegean Sea yesterday to defend a barren islet that Greece fears could emerge as a Falklands-type target of neighbouring Turkey (John Carr writes).

The Foreign Ministry said yesterday there was "no question over sovereignty" of Imia, little more than a lump of rock a few miles off the Turkish coast. It said Turkey officially laid claim to it last month: the first such incident in more than 70 years.

Greece said a full-scale diplomatic incident was unlikely. But Imia reawakened fears

that Turkey would like to take over some of the smaller islands of the eastern Aegean, under Greek administration since 1947.

The Greek Government said a Turkish cargo vessel which ran aground on Imia late last month refused an offer of help, claiming that the island was under Turkish sovereignty. Athens, at the time, rejected the argument.

Last year, Turkey threatened to go to war if Athens extended control around its islands from six to 12 miles. It said the Aegean Sea would be turned into "a Greek lake".

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ARTS 29-31



Joan Osborne gives old sounds a new voice

EDUCATION 33



Why I chose to send my son to St Olave's

SPORT 35-40



Football drifter in search of wider acclaim

TELEVISION AND RADIO Pages 38, 39

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY JANUARY 26 1996

Regulator is over-ruled and British Gas's rivals are jubilant

Eggar rejects £1.5bn gas levy

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS have dropped plans to take powers for a consumer levy to bail out British Gas from liabilities of £1.5 billion.

smooth transition to a competitive market in household gas supplies. That view is shared by Ms Spottiswoode.

assessment as we did: It would have been an horrendous political risk.



Clare Spottiswoode fears for the viability of British Gas



Last resort: Tim Eggar said the Government would consider aid for British Gas

Sir Rocco's comeback aims stir Granada

By ALAN DAIR MURRAY

NEWS that Sir Rocco Forte is preparing a bid for part of his old empire sent Granada shares on a roller-coaster ride yesterday, touching an all-time high of 738p, before closing at 704p, down 3p.

Easier times The Confederation of British Industry yesterday endorsed the idea that employees should have higher real wages and own a larger slice of the country's wealth.

Bluer skies Boeing, the world's leading aircraft manufacturer, predicts a recovery in sales to \$22 billion during the current year after an 11 per cent fall in 1995.

BUSINESS TODAY

Table with financial data including FT-SE 100, Long Bond, US Rate, LONDON MONEY, STERLING, DOLLAR, NORTH SEA OIL, and GOLD.

Electricity plan to spend millions on shining image

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

THE electricity industry is considering spending several million pounds a year in a long-running advertising campaign to spruce up its image and to counter poor publicity generated from high profits and fat-cat executive pay.

Saatchi & Saatchi has drafted plans for a campaign in which it tells the industry: 'If you do nothing, you collectively stand to lose many millions and risk also your licence to operate' as you would wish.

Premium Bond wins cut

By SARA MCCONNELL

THE odds on winning a prize on the Premium Bonds have lengthened. National Savings yesterday bowed to Treasury pressure to cut the number of prize payouts after falls in interest rates.

Belling pension fraud solicitor given nine years

By JON ASHWORTH

THE disgraced former solicitor at the centre of the Belling pension fund scandal was jailed for nine years yesterday.

Midas Leech turns £50,000 into £55m

By GEORGE SIVELL

KEVIN LEECH, who put £50,000 into ML Laboratories in 1987, yesterday cashed in £55 million of shares via a Jersey company of which he owns 68 per cent.

400p each. ML was first listed on the old Stock Exchange third market in 1987 at an equivalent to yesterday's share price of 10p.

million loss for the year to September 30, compared with a £2.3 million loss in 1994. Losses are normal for companies using up cash to develop new pharmaceuticals.



Leech: £55 million share sale

Advertisement for PENSIONS DIRECT COST LESS, Merchant Investors Assurance, including contact information and a form.

Burton Group's sales up

By Sarah Bagnall

BURTON GROUP, the Debenhams to Dorothy Perkins clothing retailer, provided further evidence yesterday that it was firmly back on the road to recovery.

Sir John Hoskyns, chairman, told the annual meeting that sales rose 5.9 per cent in the 20 weeks to January 20, helped by an 8.5 per cent advance by the multiples. Analysts raised their profit forecasts from about £120 million to £130 million.

Sir John said: "In spite of the encouraging performance for the first 20 weeks of the year, the lack of overall growth in the retail clothing market which has been widely reported forces us to remain somewhat cautious on the trading outlook for the full year."

As the group had predicted, the growth in the gross margin was expected to slow, so yesterday's news that the rate had eased from 2.2 to 1.9 per cent was no surprise.

Kenwood Appliances said that third-quarter sales rose 16 per cent, with UK sales ahead 24 per cent. The UK performance contrasts with the 7 per cent decline recorded in the six months to September 30.

Tempus, page 24



Goodhead printing and publishing, chaired by John Madejski, right, with John Cooling, managing director, has restored the interim dividend at 0.05p, the first time it has been paid since 1990-91: pre-tax profits rose to £451,000, up from £76,000

EC urges common market for defence equipment

By Ross Tieman, Industrial Correspondent

THE European Commission has unveiled a package of proposals designed to create a common market in defence equipment and redress the European Union's \$4 billion-a-year arms deficit with the United States.

In a report yesterday, Martin Bangemann, the Industry Commissioner, claimed the 15 member states could save \$13.6 billion a year by opening their national procurement markets to other member states.

Because of its sensitivity, defence purchases have hitherto been exempt from EU rules obliging public tenders to be opened to competition from companies throughout the Union.

But the proposal is likely to face mixed reactions from member states, which recognise the opportunities from collaboration, but find it politically difficult to shed jobs in order to buy cheaper arms from their neighbours.

It will also provoke alarm in the United States, the leading overseas source of high-tech weaponry for most EU mem-

bers. The Commission suggests arms companies from outside the EU should be denied the right to take action against states that fail to hold open procurement decisions. And it proposes tariffs against arms imported from beyond the Union.

That is a direct threat to the huge United States arms industry, which is a leading supplier of transport and fighter planes, helicopters and missiles to many member states. According to commission research, the US is the

overseas supplier of choice for almost all the member states. The Commission said that between 1988 and 1992, the US exported \$18 billion of major conventional weapons to Europe, but bought only \$1.7 billion of arms manufactured within the EU. "It's a total imbalance," said Mr Bangemann.

The report also called for negotiations with third countries to insist they must provide "comparable and effective" access to their markets, in exchange for equal rights with European suppliers.

The Commission calculates that 12 EU states, excluding the three most recent members, Sweden, Austria and Finland, shed 600,000 of their 1.6 million defence jobs during the four-year period.

As a result, arms companies in many EU states are now too small to be economic serving national markets alone, and face intensifying competition from rivals in the United States.

Barclays quits share registration

BARCLAYS BANK is to close its share registration business by March after deciding that it is not commercially viable (Patricia Tehan writes).

Barclays said it hoped that most of the 450 people employed at Beckenham, Kent, and Aitricham, Cheshire, would keep their jobs

because the bank is in discussion with Independent Registrars Group and Lloyds Bank Registrars to provide registration for its customers.

A spokeswoman said the business had been deemed to be a non-core activity for Barclays.

The move follows Nat-

West's sale of its share registration business to Royal Bank of Scotland, in 1994, and is part of an increasing trend as share registrars face requirements for significant investments in technology in order to compete.

Pennington, page 25

Governor defends supervision by Bank

By Janet Bush and Patricia Tehan

EDDIE GEORGE, Governor of the Bank of England, yesterday defended his institution's role in banking supervision and said that the advantages of the present system should be weighed against calls for alternatives.

Speaking at the London School of Economics, he said that arguments in favour of a single financial services regulator "seem to me seriously to underestimate the complexity of the issue". He said that the Bank's unique vantage point of supervising each individual bank helped it to monitor threats to the system as a whole, even when preventative supervision had failed.

Meanwhile, Brian Quinn, the Bank director in charge of supervision who retires next month, called for international standards for payments and settlements systems that would provide a "safety net" in the event of failure.

In a speech in New York, he said that the Bank had begun to negotiate memoranda of understanding with regulatory bodies in the UK so that they can be aware of all the risks to which a bank may be subject and to try to have early warning of problems. But such a safety net was not uniformly available in other countries and he said that the collapse of Barings, Britain's oldest merchant bank, pointed up the need for co-operation between regulatory authorities in different countries.

After the collapse of Barings last February, the Bank was criticised by the Board of Banking Supervision. In its inquiry into the collapse, it said that the Bank's performance could have been better and one of 17 recommendations it made was increased international cooperation.

Meanwhile, the Bank yesterday published a paper setting out plans for a facility for stripping gilts into their coupon and principal payments, a reform designed to offer investors and traders greater flexibility and so cut the cost of government borrowing.

The Bank said that its consultative document last May had turned up broad demand for this new facility. It is asking for further responses by March 1.

Ulster Bank head makes peace call

THE head of one of Ireland's biggest banking groups has called for "a third track" in the Northern Ireland peace process. Sir George Quigley, chairman of Ulster Bank Group, said he believed that such a track, covering development of economic opportunities for the island of Ireland, would find "a broad measure of agreement". Sir George, chairman of the Northern Ireland Economic Council, is a director of the Ulster Bank's parent group, National Westminster Bank.

Sir George told an Ulster Bank conference in Dublin: "The peace dividend for the island as a whole largely depends on the North's response to the economic opportunities opened up by peace... The stronger the economic circuitry island-wide, the more each part is likely to share in the success of the other."

Procter progress

PROCTER & GAMBLE'S second-quarter profits rose 11 per cent, to \$336 million, from the same period a year earlier. The food and household products conglomerate said that revenues rose 7 per cent, to \$9.09 billion. Six-month fiscal year profits were up 12 per cent, to \$1.73 billion, on revenue of \$18.1 billion, the company said. John Pepper, chairman, spoke of "excellent volume growth" in North America and "record shipments in key growing markets like China and Eastern Europe".

Jobs created at Siebe

SIEBE is creating 350 jobs worldwide because of an influx of orders worth more than £50 million. The engineering group said 80 new posts would be created in the UK, with another 20 recruited for service contracts in the Middle East. The remaining new staff will be recruited in the US and Far East. The group, based in Windsor, Berkshire, said expansion of its workforce followed record orders in control systems business.

Airtours warning

AIRTOURS has given warning that the tour holiday market remains under a cloud. Bookings had fallen 34 per cent so far in the current financial year compared with the corresponding period last year. David Crossland, chairman, told shareholders at the annual meeting. That reflects a later launch to the 1996 brochure, but was a modest improvement since December. The winter season was progressing satisfactorily, with UK bookings up 4 per cent.

Laker flies again

SIR Freddie Laker, pioneer of cheap transatlantic airfares, will be launching the first flight of his new service, Laker Airways, on March 27 after yesterday's granting of a licence by the US Department of Transportation. The twice-weekly flight, from Florida to Gatwick, will be the first run by Sir Freddie since Skytrain's collapse 14 years ago. The new airline is owned 49 per cent by Sir Freddie and 51 per cent by Oscar Wyatt, the Texan oil millionaire.

Weiss braced for defeat

EDWARD WEISS was ready to concede defeat in his battle to continue as chairman of Water Hall after shareholders appeared to back a resolution tabled by Raschid Abdullah, a director, calling for his removal from the board. The outcome of a vote at yesterday's extraordinary meeting will be known today. Mr Weiss is likely to be succeeded by Anthony Smith. Together with his brothers, Ahmed and Osman, Mr Abdullah controls 19 per cent of the company's shares.

TOURIST RATES

Bank	Bank	Bank
Notes	Notes	Notes
Australia \$	2.16	2.00
Austria Sch	16.76	15.26
Belgium Fr	49.08	47.78
Canada C	2.150	2.050
Cyprus Cyp	0.751	0.696
Denmark Kr	9.28	8.48
Finland Mk	7.44	6.78
France F	6.09	7.44
Germany Dm	2.40	2.19
Greece D	360.00	305.00
Hong Kong S	12.37	11.37
Ireland Pt	1.02	0.94
Israel Shk	5.1400	4.4900
Italy Lit	2519.00	2304.00
Japan Yen	172.44	160.20
Malta	0.589	0.534
Netherlands Gld	2.623	2.433
New Zealand S	2.42	2.20
Norway Kr	10.40	9.60
Portugal Esc	243.60	225.00
S Africa R	197	182
Spain Pta	196.00	183.00
Sweden Kr	10.99	10.19
Switzerland Fr	1.53	1.75
Turkey Lira	ref	89188.0
USA \$	1.61	1.64

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

PRODUCT RECALL

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Stella Artois regret to announce that small fragments of glass have been found in a small number of 25cl bottles of Stella Artois beer. These bottles can only be bought as part of a pack of 24 from supermarkets, off licences and wholesalers in the UK. The affected bottles have all been withdrawn from public sale and production stopped.

The affected green bottles are all 25cl, in a 24 pack, with a green label and a best before date from April 1996 up to and including September 1996. These bottles should not be opened and the beer should not be consumed.

The public are advised to return any affected bottles to the point of purchase for a refund.

All other Stella Artois products and packaging are unaffected. The unaffected products are Stella Artois 25cl sold in a 10 pack format, 25cl brown bottle packs, 25cl bottles with white labels, Stella 33cl bottles, Stella 330ml, 440ml and 500ml cans and Stella Dry 275ml bottles.

We are sorry to inconvenience you in this way. Even though there is only a slight risk to consumers, we think it is in everyone's interest that the bottles are withdrawn from stock.

For further information please call 0345 656065.

25cl Stella Artois will be back on sale within the next seven days. The new 24 packs will be clearly labelled "New Production".

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صكنا من الاصل

Overheard in the boardroom □ Government drops plans for gas levy □ Growing duopoly in share registrations

THE scene is a dark satanic mill, somewhere in the industrial North. Mr Gradgrind is in heated discussion with his finance director. He gestures towards the shop floor.

Gradgrind: There are workers and their families starving out there. The wages are pitiful, and are being undermined even further by desperate part-timers who will do anything for a job. The workforce has been cut to the bone, and those left don't know if they'll be on the scrapheap themselves tomorrow.

Finance man: I take your point. The share price is looking a bit toppy. It's not that long since the remuneration committee last looked at executive share options, but I suppose we could... Gradgrind: You don't understand, lad. We have been grinding the faces of the poor for the past 17 years.

Finance man: But that's what you told me to do. Gradgrind: Quoted companies like ours saw their earnings rise by an average of 16 per cent annually over the past three years, as we pulled out of recession. But wages are barely keeping pace with inflation, so cowed have our people become by mass unemployment since we smashed the union.

Finance man: That was the general idea, though.

Gradgrind: There's a new day dawning, lad, and it's called the stakeholder society. We've got to spread the wealth around a little. The workers must get a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.

Finance man: You want to increase wages? But we cut them only last March. Gradgrind: It's the wave of the future, lad. Adair Turner of the Confederation of British Industry says so. Flexible approaches to pay, which link it to productivity and performance, that's what he says.

Finance man: But our productivity is about as good as it gets — you said so. None of our competitors can lay a finger on us. Push wages up, and inflation rises and businesses like ours become less economically viable. The CBI has always been quite insistent on that in the past.

Gradgrind: I told you, there's a new day coming, and we've got to prepare for it! Finance man: Might I remind you, you don't own this mill any more, even if it's got your name on the roof. The people who do won't like it, and they have their ways of showing it — look at that

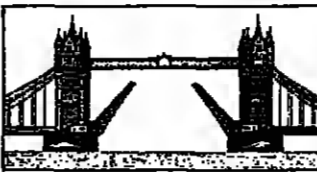
Italian sandwich bar on the High Street they sold down the river just the other day. Gradgrind: A bit of brass spread around now, and we might find we've made some useful friends one day.

Finance man: I'd wait until then, if I were you. Still, words don't cost anything. I'll get the human resources boys to draw up a press release: 'We must develop a framework giving employees opportunities, prospects and participation in the economy's success' — that kind of stuff. Gradgrind: You can't — I sacked 'em all last week. (Pause). Well, you suggested it.

Bowing to common sense

HOW nice to be right. For several weeks The Times has been drawing attention to the shortcomings of the Government's plan to sneak a clause into licences for gas shippers enabling an open-ended levy to be imposed on consumers. We have also repeatedly exposed the delays in preparations

PENNINGTON



to allow 500,000 households in the South West of England a choice of gas supplier.

Yesterday, at last, the Government acknowledged the strength of the case against the levy by publicly announcing that it will be dropped. It also became clear that while Ofgas is bravely battling for an April 1 start date for the competition pilot, the Government is prepared to delay if there is a serious risk that customers' bills will be wrong.

One simple test will decide whether to go ahead with the pilot, and that is whether the new computer system and customer database developed by British Gas's pipeline subsidiary, TransCo, is working smoothly in time. Given that it has the tenth

biggest data-base in the world, this now looks highly unlikely. If there is a delay, it will have to be long enough to ensure that the revised target date is met. May, June, July, next year — why should anyone care, so long as there is no political fall-out ahead of an election.

Politics did for those accused levy powers too. These would have looked like nothing so much as a whipround for Cedric Brown. No sane politician would want to add an extra charge to consumers' bills to bail out a company better known for the size of its chief executive's pay packet than the quality of its service.

But more telling was the argument that far from acting as an insurance policy, the levy power could actually undermine efforts by British Gas to negotiate an exit from its £40 billion of take-or-pay gas contracts.

As has been said here before, British Gas's liabilities under these contracts, estimated at £1.5 billion, could in the end turn into a £2 billion asset, given an upturn in gas prices and some nifty negotiation. A successful

outcome to those talks with the producers looks all the more likely now the Government has bowed to common sense.

A suitable case for OFT treatment

SHARE registration has always been a dry, dusty, paper-laden and at times deeply inefficient backwater of banking — an unexpected death, and the resulting need to transfer share ownership can mean three months of bureaucratic delay.

This backwater is fast resembling a shark pool, Barclays is backing out of a market the bank says does not pay. Barclays, Lloyds and the Royal Bank of Scotland have, by shareholder numbers, some 72 per cent. The rest is in the hands of independents, including the International Registration Group.

One curious aspect of Barclays' exit, coming 18 months after the NatWest got out by selling to the Scots, is that the bank will only contemplate transferring its customer base to Lloyds or the IRG. The Scots,

although their market share is behind that of Lloyds, are being shut out, for unexplained reasons — too ambitious, perhaps?

Depending how much of the business goes to the independents, up to three-quarters could be in the hands of two banks by the summer, therefore. Meanwhile, not all the independents will be able to afford the investment needed to comply under the Crest paperless share-trading system, so concentrating that near-duopoly even further.

Fees paid by the companies are whatever the market will bear. The business, unprofitable now, could make money once the Crest investment is made. A suitable market for the Office of Fair Trading to investigate?

Place your bets

ONE secure income stream for those surviving registrars will be dealing with s.212 notices. These are devices aimed at detecting predators lurking on the share register, and they look like a growth industry. This week Mercury Asset Management, even as it voted on the Forte bid, was buying further into two other market bid favourites. It emerged as 10 per cent owner of Zeneca and, only yesterday, with 11 per cent of Thorn EMI. Firm long-term holdings, no doubt.

Boeing regains lead as price war takes toll

By ROSS TYEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BOEING, the world's leading aircraft manufacturer, predicts a recovery in sales to \$22 billion during the current year after an 11 per cent fall in 1995.

A ten-week strike, combined with intense competition from Airbus Industrie, the European planemakers' consortium, caused deliveries to fall from 270 to 206 last year. Frank Shrontz, Boeing's chairman, blamed the increased proportion of revenues from the defence business, where profit margins are lower, for a fall in

operating margins from 13 per cent to 11 per cent.

Net earnings for the year to December 31 were just \$393 million, down from \$856 million. Mr Shrontz said the company would have made \$783 million but for a special tax provision.

The downturn in 1995 revenues, to \$19.5 billion, had been widely expected. But while demand from airlines is recovering, Mr Shrontz said, the civil jet market would remain "extremely competitive". Boeing's production will rise,

however, to about 215 planes, he said.

In the past year, Boeing has been engaged in a vicious price war with Airbus. The battle has centred on two sectors. In the 130-seat to 150-seat market, Boeing has launched a new generation of its 737 single-aisle twin-jets to counter the impressive sales gains won by the Airbus A320 series.

In the sub-jumbo sector, Boeing's new 777 has achieved a barn-storming performance in the sales battle with the Airbus A330 twin-jet and the A340, its four-engined sister. This titanic struggle is especially important, since each plane-maker spent more than \$1 billion developing its new range, and the planes have a list price of more than \$100 million each.

Boeing's success, however, has been aided by fierce competition among the engine suppliers, Rolls-Royce of Britain, and Pratt and Whitney and General Electric of the United States.

The A340, in contrast, suffers from having only one engine supplier, jointly owned by General Electric and Snecma of France. Because Snecma is strapped for cash, it cannot cut prices, a factor that has also restricted GE's success in winning Boeing 777 orders for its GE90 engine, in which Snecma has a 25 per cent stake.

Together, the new 737 and the 777 accounted for two-thirds of all new orders booked by Boeing last year. Overall, the Seattle company was able to claim a 66 per cent share of the jet market, pushing well ahead of Airbus, which briefly took the lead in new orders during 1994.

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Jeff Hewitt, left, Unitech's finance director, and Peter Curry, its chairman

Unitech 45% ahead as Far East helps sales

By MARTIN BARROW

UNITECH, the manufacturer and distributor of electronic components and controls, said that continued strong demand in the Far East was likely to offset a decline in the rate of growth in other regions, particularly Europe, experienced in the second quarter.

Peter Curry, chairman and chief executive, said: "Increasing acceptance of our new products by major customers

should enable [the] board to report further progress in the second half."

Unitech yesterday reported a 45 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £22.9 million, from £15.8 million, for the half-year to November 30, after a 20 per cent rise in sales, to £207 million. The interim dividend, payable on April 1, rises to 2.96p, from 2.57p, after earnings per share of 14.6p (11p). The shares fell 11p, to 498p.

Government's BAA stake sold for £145m

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE Government raised £145 million yesterday for the sale of its last remaining stake in BAA, the airports operator.

The sale follows a similar deal last month in which the Treasury sold its remaining 1.87 per cent of BP, raising £153 million. It plans to sell further small packets of shares left over from its big privatisations and expects to raise up to £15 billion in all.

The 2.9 per cent stake in BAA, owner and operator of seven major British airports, was auctioned by NMI Rothschild, the merchant bank, and bought by Merrill Lynch International for 491.25p per share.

Merrill Lynch then placed the shares with institutional investors at 494p each. The stock was all sold by lunchtime and BAA's shares closed unchanged at 496p.

Rothschild sold its stake in Smith New Court, the stockbroker, to Merrill Lynch last July. But Rothschild said there was no connection with the American bank's success in yesterday's auction, in which there were several other bidders. It said Merrill Lynch had won because it

had offered the best price. The decision to sell the BAA stake was taken because the shares were creeping up towards the 500p level that was last breached in October and because market conditions were judged sufficiently stable.

Rothschild pointed out that the discount on yesterday's deal was particularly small: 0.56 per cent compared with 4 per cent for the BP sale. Merrill Lynch will have made about £30,000 on the deal.

Rothschild, a key player in the Government's privatisation that now has a major role in many European sell-offs, was appointed last September by the Treasury to sell residual stakes in privatised companies. The Government's practice was to hold back some shares when privatising in order to satisfy demand for loyalty bonuses.

The stakes still remaining include a 14 per cent interest in the Mersey Docks & Harbour Company. Small holdings in privatised water and electricity companies and generators make up the bulk of the rest, with stakes of about 2 per cent in both National Power and PowerGen.

Charge pushes AT&T into loss

From RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

AT&T, the US telecommunications group, fell into heavy loss during the final quarter of last year because of the massive restructuring charge for splitting the company into three separate businesses.

The company reported a \$2.7 billion loss after the unprecedented \$6.25 billion charge needed to divide the company and cut 40,000 jobs. Without it, the group would have made a profit of \$1.34 billion.

For the year as a whole, the profit after the restructuring charge was \$139 million, compared with \$4.7 billion before. Without the charge, however, profits would have soared to \$5.5 billion.

Defending the plan and its costs, Robert Allen, the chairman, said: "Short-term profitability is important, but long-term growth and

financial strength are essential." The aim of the plan is to allow each of the new companies to focus more efficiently on its core business.

The division of the group into more focused units poses a threat to BT, AT&T's international rival. The US telephone company has already signalled a policy of expansion in the UK, with a plan to spend up to \$1 billion before the end of the decade.

Overseas expansion, however, contributed to a rise in costs during the final quarter of last year. AT&T saw revenues rise 5 per cent to \$22.1 billion for the year, fuelled mainly by a rise in long distance and wireless services, which rose 9 per cent. Profits also rose in most areas of operations including sales of products such as cordless phones and voice processing systems.

Holliday hurt by warning

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

HOLLIDAY CHEMICALS, which specialises in dyestuffs, saw its shares slump 27 per cent after a profits warning.

The Yorkshire company said that it was being squeezed by the high cost of raw materials and pressure on pricing and sales of its own products. Its shares fell from 164p to 119p and dragged down those of Yorkshire Chemicals, which is also exposed to the dyestuffs market. Shares in Yorkshire plunged 2p to 250p.

Holliday is taking a £3.5 million charge for restructuring manoeuvres to boost profits and said that it would turn in pre-tax profit of £15.4 million for the year to the end of December as against market expectations of about £20 million.

The company is now pushing through price increases of between 3 and 5 per cent.

Tempus, page 24

Mattel launches hostile bid for Hasbro

US toy rivals locked in battle

By RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

SHARES in Bluebird Toys raced to a high of 363p yesterday after Mattel's \$5.2 billion hostile takeover bid for Hasbro, its US rival.

Bluebird shares ended the day at 354p, up 15p, amid speculation that it will soon lose its status as one of the UK's few remaining independent toy-makers. Hasbro has a 6.7 per cent stake in Bluebird, whose chief executive, Chris Burgin, previously spent 18 years with the American company. At the same time, Mattel has a longstanding arrangement to distribute Bluebird's toys in America. The bid by Mattel, maker of Fisher-Price toys as well as Barbie dolls, for Hasbro, owner of Waddingtons and Tonka Toys as well as Sindy, received strong support on Wall Street, with Hasbro shares soaring to \$46 from around \$30 when the offer was announced. The



Barbie, Mattel's golden girl



Sindy, Hasbro's heart-throb

main obstacle to a takeover would be regulatory hurdles since the companies are the largest toy-makers in the US and would have to overcome American anti-trust rules. Some analysts put their combined market share in the US at around 40 per cent. It would include favourites such as Scrabble, Monopoly, and Mr Potato Head.

Mattel now has to convince Hasbro's shareholders to accept its offer since it has declared that it will not go ahead without an agreed deal. Hasbro's management predictably rejected the offer out of hand as "incredibly presumptuous", leaving Mattel to appeal directly to their investors, who are mostly institutions, which, analysts said,

made a deal more likely to happen.

Mattel is offering 1.67 shares in the combined company for every Hasbro share. It claims that this values Hasbro at a 73 per cent premium, or \$2.2 billion, over its market price. It has even promised to pay Hasbro \$100 million if an agreed deal is blocked by regulators.

There is little love lost between the two companies, both of which have recently been expanding aggressively overseas, including Britain. Although Mattel's sales revenues of \$3.7 billion last year are not vastly more than Hasbro's \$2.9 billion, the company is much more profitable, giving it a market value more than twice that of its competitor.

Mattel, which is widely regarded as the better managed company, is worth more than \$7 billion on the stock market while Hasbro is worth only around \$2.7 billion.

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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

BA flies the kilt

YOU DON'T have to be blessed with handsome knees to fly with, or work for, British Airways. But it could help. BA has registered its own tartan, and aptly chose Burns Night to reveal the "colours" of red, white and blue and the name "British Airways Tartan". The tartan was formally registered at a ceremony at Glasgow's Turberville Hotel last night, conducted by the Scottish Tartan Society and involving a solemn ritual of prayers, toasts and dedications before the tartan was sworn in. Though British Caledonian, which BA acquired in 1987, had long sported tartan uniforms, BCal never had its "own" tartan. Ties have been made for the crew, and the BA "check" will be seen on mugs, cushions and napkins in Club World cabins on long-haul aircraft. Ironically, the tartan will not be woven north of the Border but by two Lancashire companies as cotton was the stipulated material.

Full house

GRANADA, fresh from winning the battle for Forté, is off to a cracking start if table bookings at The Savoy are any guide. John Dear, managing director of Lazard's, adviser to Granada, reportedly cannot secure a table there today to thank Jonathan Clare, joint managing director of FR firm Citigate. Will they try a Little Chef? IT'S been tough second-guessing Lord Hanson over the years, here's your chance. At 10am next Wednesday, at Hanson's AGM, he is to reveal to the world the new name of a 1,000-hectare development by Hanson Land known as the Peterborough Southern Township. What name will he announce? Offers on post-cards only, please.

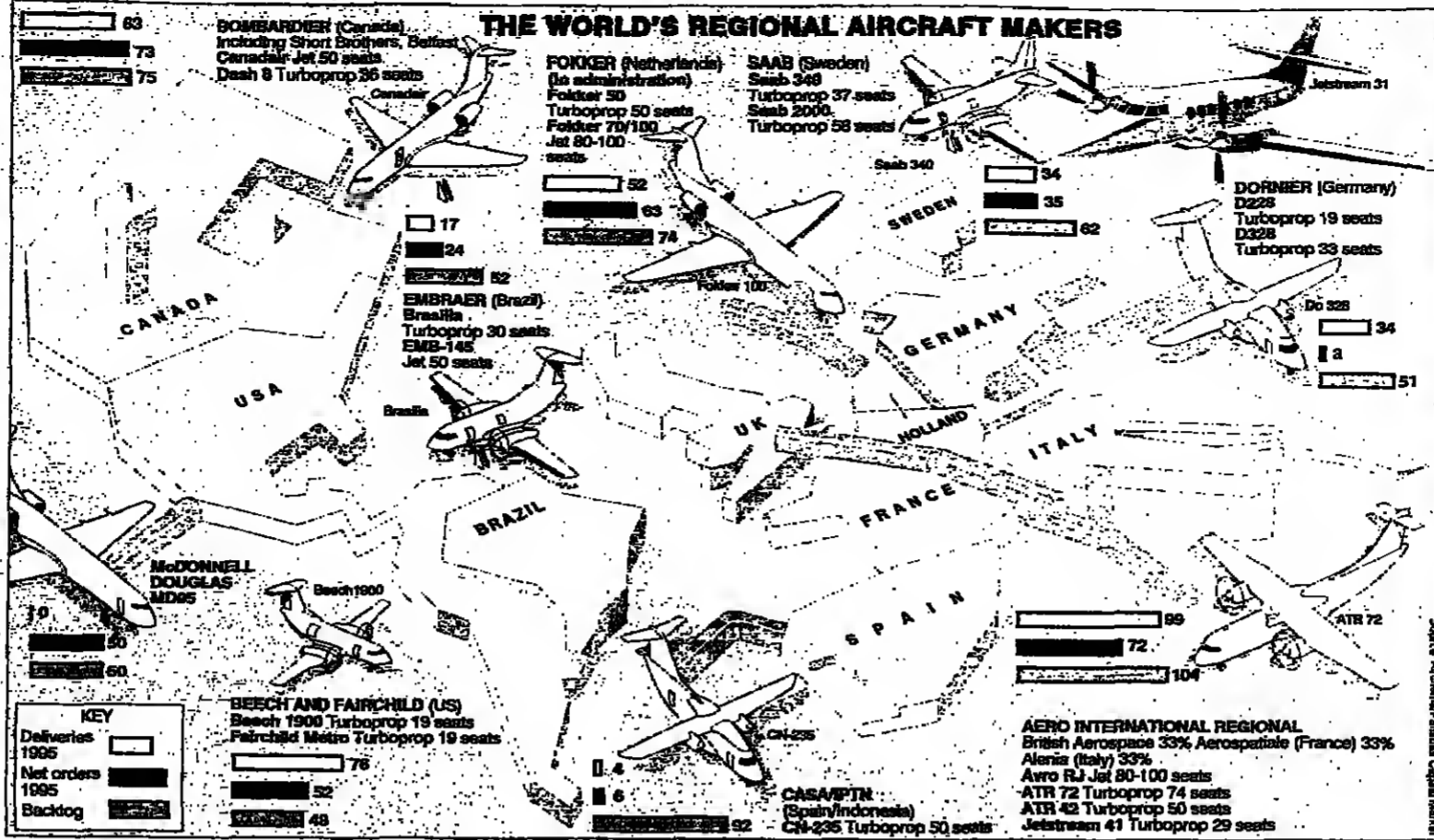


Pier glint

IF YOU see a NatWest bank manager wearing a tin hat, here's why. A campaign advertising "rock bottom" interest rates has backfired somewhat. The 225 branches that open on Saturday were given 8 inch sticks of pink, green and yellow striped rock, with "NatWest" through the centre, to hand out among the lucky branches were Brighton, East Grinstead, Scamthorpe, Grantham - but not Blackpool. Sadly, two metal staples were found in two of its 96,000 sticks. So NatWest ordered: Do not consume. Destroy or return to nearest NatWest branch. To date, we've had only 20 calls from customers to our hotline and no closed accounts," said its lady at the end of the pier.

ON MONDAY, in the wake of a High Court judgment in their favour (City Diary, January 18), nine private-client advisers formerly with Greig Middleton started at their new firm Brevin Dolphin in Birmingham. Yesterday, the 11-person institutional team that worked together at Greig Middleton in Glasgow were again united when three of the remaining four who had otherwise been on 12 months' gardening leave reported for duty at BD's Glasgow office.

COLIN CAMPBELL



Planemakers grounded by economics of common sense

Something truly remarkable is happening among the world's regional aircraft manufacturers. An outbreak of common sense is spreading like a virus, shrivelling state aid, killing off the weak.

Just how far this cull of an overpopulated and deeply unhealthy industry will be allowed to run before old vices reassert themselves will become clear over the next year or two. The Dutch Government is under intense pressure to perform yet another Fokker bail-out, while the Chinese and Koreans are clamouring to become aircraft assemblers.

Even so, the omens are better than at any time in the past half-century that economics will at last replace national ego and technology-obsessed engineers in the decision-making. In the post-war years, almost every industrialised nation thought it needed an aerospace industry to secure its national defence and ensure its mastery of leading-edge technology. Regional planes - carrying 19 to 100 passengers, were seen as technically achievable and affordable. But the airline industry moved into bigger planes to win economies of scale, leaving too many little aircraft chasing too few tip-top airline customers.

At the same time, aero engineers in love with their craft and disdainful of cost created unaffordable machines. The wing of Dornier's pride and joy, the 328-110, is an engineering masterpiece, smooth as can be, with nary a rivet in sight. But who can afford to pay \$9.1 million dollars for a 33-seat turbo-prop?

Operators of planes like this run on a shoestring - their priorities are cheap to lease and cheap to fly. Local carriers with an eye to the bottom line rent second-hand planes from an over-supplied market and keep them in the air for decades. No wonder Dornier booked only nine orders for its 328 last year. The plane cost about DM1 billion (£446 million) to develop. Daimler-Benz, Dornier's parent, wants out. You can't run an aircraft business on numbers like those.

The rot started long ago. But several elements have combined to trigger the industry shakeout now under way. First, the aviation industry slump of the late 1980s and early 1990s undermined orders and prices, leaving the industry with massive overcapacity. Governments invariably responded with subsidies. But as the losses have grown, taxpayers have become increasingly reluctant to help. Canada bit the bullet first, shuffling first to Havilland, then Canadair into the private sector, accompanied by a farewell payoff. Britain did the same with Short Brothers in Belfast, providing a third opportunity for Bombardier, the Canadian transport equipment group, to pick up something for next to nothing. Now Daimler-Benz and the Dutch Government have taken fright at Fokker losses, estimated to total 3 billion guilders (£1.2 billion) and pulled the plug. And Charles Millon, the French Defence Minister, has announced his government's intention to address the problems of France's state-owned aerospace and defence contractors, who have built up massive losses selling aircraft and aero engines below cost.

Fokker's problems have been exacerbated by a new phenomenon: intense price competition at the bottom end of the airliner market. Determined to win back customers from Airbus Industrie, its upstart European rival, Boeing of America has been offering its smallest plane, the 108 to 132-seat Boeing 737, for as little as \$20 million, betting on a 25 per cent cut in production costs by the time the planes have to be delivered. McDonnell Douglas, meanwhile, was so desperate to launch its 95-seat MD-95 twin-jet that it cut prices to little more than \$15 million a plane to win a 50-aircraft order from Valujet, an American carrier. This had a devastating impact on the price that airlines were willing to pay for Fokker's 109-seat F100 twin-jet, which used to sell for \$24 to \$30 million. The company racked up massive losses. British

Ross Tieman finds a revolution sweeping through the regional aircraft industry

Aerospace, whose Avro RJ "whisper jet" is the prime competitor for the F100 and its smaller sister, the F70, has faced a similar challenge. But BAE confronted its regional aircraft problem back in 1992, using the cashflow from its big defence business to take a £1 billion write-off for losses and restructuring.

The result is that BAE now claims to be the most cost-effective aircraft structures-maker in the world. Its Avro regional jet business has cut production to just 18 a year, booked 37 net orders in 1995, and aims to get back into profit in 1997. BAE's Jetstream turbo-prop business has ended production of the ATP and halted output of the 19-seat Jetstream 31. It now makes just one plane, the 29-seat Jetstream 41, at a reduced rate.

In the long-term, even the future of that product must be in doubt. For without regard for the pain suffered in the West, some developing countries are using their low labour costs to undercut prices on smaller planes. Embraer of Brazil, now owned by a buyout team including Wasserstein Perella, the New York buyout artists, has unveiled a surprisingly good 50-seat regional jet, the EMB-145. And in Indonesia, IPTN, the state aircraft company, has achieved certification for its 50-seat CN-235 turbo-prop and with orders guaranteed from national airlines. Russian manufacturers, too, have the skills, capacity and low labour costs needed to mount a strong challenge in regional aircraft markets, if they can learn commercial skills.

Picking likely survivors is not easy but there are some favourites. First, Aero International Regional (AIR), a regional aircraft marketing operation formed by BAE and ATR, a Franco-Italian joint venture that builds turboprops in Toulouse, France. AIR is

owned equally by BAE, Aerospatiale, the French state aircraft company, and Alenia, part of state-controlled Finmeccanica. By combining in this way, the partners can share the high cost of sales and support to small aircraft around the world, while intensifying pressure on their independently-owned assembly companies to reduce costs. But competitiveness and profitability will not be achieved overnight, especially at ATR, which is burdened by high social costs and old-fashioned attitudes.

The second likely survivor is Bombardier, which has proved adept at rationalising former state-owned plants, cutting costs, and using computers for simultaneous design engineering around the world to cut development costs and speed programmes. It could yet pick the bones from the Fokker jet business, slotting the F70/F100 above its own, newly launched 50-seat Canadair jet.

The third survivor is Saab Aircraft as a niche player, thanks to its Saab 2000 high-speed, 58-seat turbo-prop, although it might combine with another player. Further consolidation is inevitable: so is the extension of partnership arrangements. Governments and industry are beginning to acknowledge that developing a 100-seat jet costs little less than building a 400-seater selling for four times the price. If the 100-seater is to pay its way, sales volumes must be much higher.

To secure markets, and accommodate Asian industrial ambitions, AIR is now competing against Boeing to partner China and Korea in designing and producing an Asian Express 100-seat jet. For AIR, this would be an opportunity to improve access to the world's fastest-growing aircraft market, replace the Avro range while sharing the \$2 billion development cost, and perhaps to recruit Chinese partners to contribute to developing a new Airbus super-jumbo, the A3XX. Boeing, which already has Japanese partners on its 777 sub-jumbo, has similar goals. Regional aircraft manufacture is at last becoming a commercial, and international, business, governed by the laws of economics. Taxpayers across Europe should heave a sigh of relief.

As losses have grown, taxpayers have become increasingly reluctant to help

Learning from the successes of the 'Tigers'

Edward Stourton on achieving social cohesion and economic growth

The area around Shenzhen, the special economic zone just across Hong Kong's border with China, boasts the fastest economic growth in the world. The millionaires who have built their fortunes on the back of Deng Xiaoping's capitalist experiment cannot leave the country to spend what they have made, so the prices of luxury goods have inflated wildly: a new, especially good bottle of brandy costs the equivalent of £900.

The average income in China's poorest agricultural regions can be as low as £100 a year, someone earning that would have to work for nine years without spending to accumulate the cost of a decent drink in Shenzhen.

The existence of such extremes of wealth and poverty within a single nation is a vivid illustration of the dangers of economic growth without social cohesion: there are some China watchers who believe regional economic inequalities could turn the Middle Kingdom into a Bosnia on a monstrous scale.

The Malaysian response is that those values have made it possible to achieve the social cohesion they need to keep growing. Chinese business, with most in loss from positive discrimination, seems to accept it partly because of the cultural tradition that sees the Middle Kingdom into a Bosnia on a monstrous scale.

The debate about Asian values is beginning to make the transition from the world of academe to the field of political battle. There are those who argue that Asia is simply enjoying a self-confident phase of development and that its values will be eroded as surely as Victorian values have in Britain. Others, like David Howell, the Conservative MP, say that "these societies may not be behind us, catching up and going through what we went through... they may be societies which are leapfrogging our trials and tribulations... and going down another path".

The most provocative comment in my investigation came not from Asia but America. Peter Berger, of the Institute for the Study of Economic Culture in Boston, says that in the West's high-tech and consumption based economies the values prized in Asia could be positively damaging: that "wastefulness not saving, buying on credit, interest in self-realisation rather than working for one's grandchildren" could be the new economic virtues. "Not," he admitted, "a morally edifying vision - but it could be economically functional".

Asio Gold, Sunday, January 28, 4.15pm.



Patten: blame factor

Customer is ultimate stakeholder

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, triggered off a new stage in the political debate when he launched his "Stakeholder Society" idea on an unsuspecting nation. Interpretation and reactions varied wildly, as friend and foe alike tried on the new clothes for size - and mostly found that they could be adjusted and trimmed to fit pretty well any political figure from Seventies-style trade unionism to shapes well to the right of the political centre.

A wagon for everyone to hitch his team to, or a complex new theme to be developed and polished over time? Or perhaps just an empty slogan, as most opponents have hastened to charge. It is dangerous for a politically innocent businessman to wander far into the pre-election minefield of controversial social ideas, and I have no intention of doing so. On the other hand, the concept of "stakeholders" has well-defined meaning in business theory, and there may be some value in setting it out in simple terms - at least as seen through the eyes of a practitioner of nearly 40 years' experience in one of the world's largest and most successful companies. I leave it to Mr Blair and his friends to draw the parallels - if they see any. As anyone charged with corporate governance will attest, the public-listed company survives and prospers to the extent that it meets and satisfies - in quantifiable and measured terms - the needs and requirements of a variety of stakeholders. The providers of its resources - shareholders, lenders and employees - the providers of its services - suppliers, agents and distributors; the providers of its context - society and governments. The company answers those complex but interrelated challenges by one single means - by satisfying its customers or consumers with goods or services which they have agreed to purchase, at a price which demonstrates value added. Its ultimate stakeholder, therefore, is its customer, without whose approval the whole process is meaningless. In a free market economy like ours, the whole boiling works, because the customer



Tony Blair's new concept already has a clear meaning in everyday business, says Sir Michael Perry, left



of all our goods and services enjoys unfettered freedom to choose between competing offerings, which are forced by that very fact of choice to vie with each other for customer favour. It is the reality of competition in the marketplace which ensures that the demands of all the other stakeholders - often in harmony, but sometimes sharply in conflict with each other - remain in balance. On this view, the economy as a whole can be seen as a complex web of interrelated and interdependent business systems, operating in accordance with values, norms and standards for which there is consent by society. That consent may be challenged and, over time, modified by changing ideas, such as, in recent years, by deepening and shifting perceptions of the impact of our actions on the environment. Also the precise nature of social consent may be subject to constant redefinition, but our very system depends on the existence of values, norms and standards which competitive "stakeholding" companies have to satisfy. There is nothing soft, woolly or "liberal" about that concept - just hard, everyday business reality. The disciplines of competition are very exacting. Within the company itself, these realities apply. Employees of all levels are both resource and stakeholder. As resource, they are subject to all the rigours of competitive reality - their number, their quality, their training, their cost. Their position as stakeholders is dictated by personal and family necessity, guaran-

eed by the competitive need of the company for their services, and enshrined in the principles and norms of our society. Just to hammer it home, employees are increasingly shareholders too. As the forces of global competition intensify, the pressure on companies increases both to economise on the number of employees they employ as a resource, yet to strengthen their long-term commitment and develop their full potential as stakeholders. There are wider consequences for society in terms of long-term unemployment and social exclusion. It is primarily for politicians, not business people, to address these problems, which is why stakeholding as a concept can reach beyond the firm. However, the role of management is clear. Quite simply to maximise the benefit to the whole undertaking of getting the stakeholder balance right. For companies, getting it right is no easier than it is for politicians. And the consequences of getting it wrong can be just as terminal. Best management practice today sets out to harness all those stakeholder interests in pursuit of the same goal: the securing and retaining of customer preference. In politics, the customer is the voter. Bon chance, Mr Blair. Sir Michael Perry is the chairman of Unilever

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Unions welcome CBI backing for higher real pay

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

TRADE UNION and Labour Party leaders yesterday welcomed the Confederation of British Industry's endorsement of higher real wages and employees having a larger slice of the country's wealth.

John Monks, TUC General Secretary, led the approval of the shift on pay signalled by Adair Turner, Director-General of the CBI, in a speech to personnel managers yesterday, which he said "clearly recognised that a valued, well-motivated workforce was good for business. The TUC leader said: "This is the way to promote competitiveness and protect individuals at work."

In his speech, previewed by *The Times* yesterday, Mr Turner gave some support to Labour's stakeholder proposals. A senior Labour source said: "What the director-general is recognising is that economies which grow fastest are those with companies who involve their workers in the future of the company. We have long argued that the route to competitiveness for Britain is not down the road of low wages and cheap labour but of building a workforce with high skills and high redundancy."

In his speech to an Institute of Personnel and Development conference, Mr Turner said it was not in the economy's interest for employees to continue to be given an ever-smaller slice of the country's wealth. "We must develop a framework giving employees opportunities, prospects and participation in the economy's success - dare I say a stakeholding," he said.

He told the conference in London: "We cannot expect, and would not want, the share of national income given to wages to decline indefinitely. As we achieve sustained economic growth we must accept that average earnings growth will tend to exceed price rises over the long run. This will not be economic suicide, if reward is driven by the right factors; namely sustainable productivity and profitability improvements."

While he was not giving the green light to a pay giveaway, Mr Turner said that Britain could now afford longer-term growth in real wages because the wage-price spiral has been broken in this recovery thanks to greater labour market flexibility.



Home front: Ian Homersham, left, and George Pope

Mixed fortunes in property market

By Martin Barrow

JOHN D WOOD, the residential estate agent, said demand for property in the better streets and squares of central London had lifted prices to a record in the past six months.

But the market fared less well in peripheral areas, where there is more caution and less confidence. In the country business had been restricted by the lack of property coming on to the market

as potential vendors await an upturn in prices.

The company, where George Pope and Ian Homersham are joint chairmen, is holding the interim dividend at 0.75p a share after pre-tax profits fell to £231,000 from £301,000 in the year to October 31. Earnings fell to 1.5p (2.3p) a share.

The increasing value of agricultural land was attracting investors, with farms achieving reassuringly good prices.

Standard Chartered dismisses bid talk

By Patricia Tehan, Banking Correspondent

SHARES in Standard Chartered look a tumble yesterday after the bank said that it was not in bid talks.

A brief statement was made in response to a request from the London Stock Exchange, which had become concerned about recent rises in its share price.

On Friday, the shares rose 5 per cent to 618p and yesterday they hit 662½p, an increase of 101½p, or 18 per cent, this month, before the announcement sent them back to 638p.

Standard Chartered had refused to comment on speculation at the weekend centred on a possible bid from NatWest, or a German bank.

In response to the inquiry from the Stock Exchange, Standard Chartered said that it was not aware of any circumstances leading to the recent movement in its share price.

But analysts believe that Standard Chartered remains a bid target. There have also been reports that it is close to a sale of its loss-making Asian securities business.

Last week saw four positive reports from brokers on Standard Chartered. BZW said the bank had growth potential and that its share price could reach 710p.

It predicted that increased loan volumes, higher margins and tight cost control would contribute to a 16 per cent growth in earnings this year. BZW is forecasting pre-tax profits of £640 million for 1995, up from £510 million in 1994.

Malcolm Williamson, Standard Chartered's chief executive, said in a staff note last November that the board saw the future of the bank as an independent company.

NatWest has refused to comment on the bid rumours. But it has recently stated that its objectives are to build up its investment banking, private banking and UK retail franchise, means that Standard Chartered is not a logical choice.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Surge in bad debts hits bank profits

NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK, which owns the Yorkshire Bank, Clydesdale Bank and Northern Bank, yesterday blamed a deteriorating economic climate in Britain for a surge in bad debts. Unveiling a fall in profits from its UK and Irish banking activities from \$99 million (£44.2 million) to \$79 million for the first quarter of the year to December, the bank said that it had been forced to raise its provisions for bad debts at the Yorkshire Bank.

National Australia Bank, which has made no secret of its desire to make further acquisitions in the UK, particularly southern England, however pushed up its overall net profits 11.8 per cent to \$513 million, helped by a first-time contribution from Michigan National Bank, its new US acquisition. Don Argus, managing director, said that activity was slowing in all of the economies in which the bank operated.

Tate & Lyle ahead

TATE & LYLE, the sugar producer, said yesterday it sees first-quarter profits "modestly above" last year's for the same period and in line with its own expectations. This would be in spite of a decline at Staley, its US subsidiary. The impact on earnings will be mitigated by the hedging position taken on maize and further cost reductions. Tate Lyle said: Group pre-tax profits for the first half of the current financial year are expected to be ahead of last year, when they were £152.8 million. The company's shares fell 8p to 463p.

Witan advances

WITAN, the investment trust managed by Henderson Touche Remnant, saw a 15.5 per cent rise in net asset value per share, to 290.8p, in the year to December 31. Earnings per share were 1.65p per cent up, at 6.76p. The dividend for the year rises from 6.1p to 6.45p, with a final payment of 3.5p due on March 14. Witan said its long-term policy was to invest in a diversified international portfolio. It said that there is no reason to think that markets are about to collapse, and predicted that, as long as earnings continue to impress, markets will climb higher.

Tugendhat for Circle

LORD TUGENDHAT is to be the next chairman of Blue Circle Industries, the construction materials company. He will succeed Sir Peter Walters, who is to retire after the company's annual meeting, on May 22. Lord Tugendhat, who yesterday joined the board of Blue Circle as non-executive director, remains chairman of Abbey National and a non-executive director of the BOC Group and Eurotunnel. He was chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority for five years and is a former vice-president of the European Commission.

Charity funds recover

UK charity funds achieved a total return of 19 per cent in 1995, recovering strongly from a poor showing in 1994, when they recorded a negative return of -5 per cent. The WM Company's preliminary survey of UK charity fund performance said that, over a five-year period, returns averaged 15 per cent a year, against retail price inflation of about 3 per cent. Over a ten-year period, charity funds have beaten inflation by about 3 per cent a year. The average UK charity yield was about 5 per cent in 1995, slightly up on 1994.

Lookers makes £25m Ulster deal

By Martin Barrow

LOOKERS, the motor distributor, is to buy Northern Ireland's largest car dealership group, the Charles Hurst Group, in a cash and shares deal worth £25.3 million.

Hurst represents ten car manufacturers from a single, 15-acre site at Boucher Road, Belfast. The business was formerly listed, but was taken private in 1985.

Lookers, of which Ken

Martindale is chairman, plans to raise £10.8 million from a rights issue of new shares at 125p each and a subscription by Hamilton Finance for 975,000 shares at 144p. Existing shares remained at 144p yesterday.

Hamilton, a subsidiary of Woodchester Investments, the Irish-based financial services group, owns almost 30 per cent of Lookers, to fall to 24.4 per cent after the rights issue and an issue of consideration shares to Hurst's vendors.

Lookers will use the new funds to pay a £19.5 million cash consideration for Hurst, along with bank borrowings of up to £7.4 million. In addition, Lookers is to sell to Woodchester the assets of Adelaide, Hurst's finance business, for £3.4 million.



Martindale: buying dealer

PUBLIC NOTICES

SAFETY RECALL NOTICE
Lux and Glass Star Ceiling Lantern
ex Carlos Remes Ltd.
A potential electrical safety hazard has been identified on some of the above range of electrical light fittings.
If you have purchased one of these fittings, please contact or return it to the outlet from which you bought it, where advice or a full refund will be given.
These fittings have been on sale for two years and have been sold by the following major retail outlets: John Lewis Partnership, House of Fraser, Liberty Plc.
In addition, the fitting has been sold through a number of small independent retail outlets.

LEGAL NOTICES

HERBELL LIMITED
IN ALMAY...
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Leicester City Council, situated at 30 Eastbourne Terrace, London W2, on Thursday 26th February 1996 at 10.30am.

Law Report January 26 1996 Court of Appeal

Taxing solicitors' costs in legal aid

L v L (Legal Aid Taxation)
Before Lord Justice Neill, Lord Justice Aldous and Sir John Balcombe
[Judgment January 24]
It was not appropriate in a taxation of legal aid costs under Order 62 of the Rules of the Supreme Court to fix the solicitors' direct costs artificially low and adjust the total by inflating the amount for general care and conduct so as to arrive at a fair total.

The bill claimed £60 an hour for a survey and £50 an hour for a legal opinion. The district judge allowed £45 and £30 respectively. In accordance with Order 62, rule 35 the solicitors applied for a review and lodged objections to the hourly charging rate. The district judge upheld his earlier decision. The matter had first come to the Court of Appeal in February 1994 but it was adjourned to enable the Lord Chancellor's Department or the Legal Aid Board to be represented. In the event neither wished to be represented.

EU right of residence has economic base

Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Vitale
Before Lord Justice Staughton, Lord Justice Ward and Sir Ralph Gibson
[Judgment January 19]
Citizens of member states of the European Union did not have an unqualified right of residence in any other member state as a result of article 8a of the EC Treaty, save as a result of the decision of the Secretary of State under article 6 of the Treaty on European Union 1992 (QJ 284).

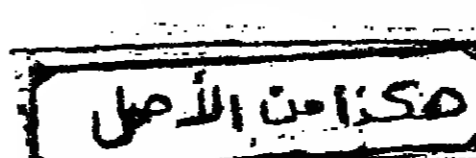
Every citizen of the union shall have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the member states, subject to the limitations and conditions laid down in this treaty and by the measures adopted to give it effect.
Mr Peter Duffy and Mr Paul Stanley for the appellant, Mr Richard Plender, QC for the secretary of state.
LORD JUSTICE STAUGHTON, giving the judgment of the court, said that the issue was whether the Maastriicht Treaty conferred a directly effective right to reside in the United Kingdom even when the appellant was neither employed nor seeking work with genuine prospects of obtaining it and when he did not have sufficient resources to avoid becoming a burden on the social assistance system of the UK during the period of his residence.

LEGAL NOTICES
RESIDUAL LIMITED
IN ALMAY...
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TRUSTEE ACTS
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Leicester City Council, situated at 30 Eastbourne Terrace, London W2, on Thursday 26th February 1996 at 10.30am.

LEGAL NOTICES
RESIDUAL LIMITED
IN ALMAY...
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Main table containing unit trust prices, organized by fund name and price change. Includes columns for fund name, price, and change.

Advertisement for HSBC Group with text: "first direct 'you don't get passed from person to person' for 24 hour telephone banking 0800 24 24 24".



Handwritten text at the bottom of the page: "سكربت بالاصح"

THEATRE

Paws for applause: what qualities have made Cats the longest-running musical in the West End or New York?

MUSIC 1

On the South Bank the Emerson Quartet begin their Beethoven quartet cycle in superlative form

THE TIMES ARTS

MUSIC 2

... while the German maestro Christoph von Dohnányi brings out the best in the Philharmonia

OPERA

At Scottish Opera, exciting young talent flourishes in a fine performance of La Traviata

Who's a clever kitty then?



Nine out of ten audiences prefer whiskers: the cast of Cats celebrate 6,138 performances on Monday. Worldwide box-office takings exceed £1 billion

Expect the assembled tabbies and alley-cats to do zoologically improbable things at the New London Theatre at about 10.30 on Monday night. Rumour says that the cast of Cats will launch into a hit number from A Chorus Line, maybe wearing spangled topers above their striped, pointed ears, maybe not. Either way, the song is intended as a gesture of respect to a rival that has succumbed to the inexorable tramp of endless paws. Monday is when Andrew Lloyd Webber's tribute to the feline classes overtakes Michael Bennett's celebration of showbiz as the longest-running musical in the history of either the West End or Broadway.

THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale explains the appeal of Cats, the world's longest-running musical

tendon, and Elaine Paige had taken her place at virtually no notice. Only during the previews had all the finance for the show been found, and even then, technical troubles had threatened to delay or even wreck the show. A hoax caller halted the curtain call. "Please leave now," I recall Brian Blessed's Deuteronomy telling us from inside his ludicrous grey fuff. "There is a bomb." Well, there was not and there was. The reviewers more than made up for the New London's failure to go off with a bang. Legend says we collectively staled the show for such obvious disadvantages as a near-total lack of plot, but legend is wrong. We critics variously declared it exhilarating, the cat's pyjamas, breath-taking, unmissable and (The Sunday Telegraph in donnish mode) euphoriously eclectic. Even I, who have sometimes written ungenerously of Lloyd Webber, called his music "vigorous, inventive, even delightful". So it remains, nearly 15 years after the event. Paige may no longer be mooching about in her antique Harrods

more? Good marketing — that yellow-eyed dog on ads and T-shirts — cannot explain why the show has been seen by more than seven million people in London alone. Sentimental attachment to pets cannot explain why it has triumphed even in countries where our furry friends end up in stews. There is no clear reason why Cats should have succeeded at all, let alone taken more than £1 billion in theatres from Seoul to Helsinki to Wichita, Kansas. Could it be the combination of Gillian Lynne's whizzing

choreography, Trevor Nunn's skilful exploitation of John Napier's tyre-and-tin set, and Lloyd Webber's affable harmonies? Cats-darting among spectators sitting amid the debris add to the informal, rough-theatre feel. Imagine a counterpart of the RSC's Nicholas Nickleby orchestrated by Puccini and allowed to frolic in your back yard one nice, moonlit night. Those are the influences, that is the atmosphere. Perhaps they are enough to persuade Henry to talk about Cats to Jane, Jane to recommend it to Kevin and Tracy — and so to the frenzied pyramid-ticketing that still continues. Whatever the reasons, Cats can make fewer torques-in-cheek claims than those in the publicity burn: the 31,875 head-ache pills swallowed by the New London box-office staff; the 2,813 miles of cotton used repairing costumes; the terrifying fact that, if you laid end to end all the times Memory has been played by American radio stations, you would have eight years of easy listening ahead of you. The show has clearly touched myriads who never normally visit the theatre. Not least, it took the British musical over the ramparts of Broadway and into the once-

impregnable keep it has occupied ever since. True, Jesus Christ Superstar and Evita preceded it, but it was Cats that made the great American breakthrough. Nearly 14 years after its opening, the Broadway production is still packing out the Winter Gardens and may end up claiming the long-run record from the London original. Who says lunatic enterprise and preposterous chutzpah are never rewarded?

CONCERTS: Beethoven in quartet and orchestral form

Can there be a leaner, tenser sound in all music than that of the Emerson Quartet ripping into Beethoven? The answer is probably yes: try this fearsome foursome ripping into Bartók. In Turin recently the Emersons played all six Bartók quartets in one concert. Part of me longs to have been there: the other doesn't. I can imagine listeners emerging from the experience as nervous wrecks. Now the Americans have come to London to play all the Beethoven quartets in ten days — a comparative dawdle. But any illusion that the cycle will be a relaxed and urbane affair can be swiftly dispelled. This is Beethoven taken far beyond the comfort zone: audacious in spirit and in technical display. It is Beethoven reared for our fraught and fractious century. In short, it is Beethoven played like Bartók. And it is utterly gripping, at least in the urgent, young-man-in-a-hurry world of the early quartets. How the Emersons think their way into the

Ripping into Ludwig Emerson Quartet Queen Elizabeth Hall

metaphysical mysteries of the late masterpieces will only emerge next week — but it certainly won't be dull. The intensity never slackens, even in as famously expressive a slow movement as the Adagio molto e mesto of Op 59, No 1, which followed Op 18 Nos 3 and 1 on Wednesday. Indeed, that interpretation was so powerful because it seemed like an extension, not a relaxation, of the stressful and questing first movement, and the stabbing traumas of the scherzo. But then, intensity is a built-

in element of the Emersons' renowned technical ferocity. This is not a quartet that basks. Narcissus-like, in its beautiful sound, Beauty doesn't much come into it. The Adagio affettuoso of Op 18 No 1, for instance, was stripped of all potential for sentimentality and left stark and bleak: a vision of a wasteland. Rather, the Emersons' characteristics — superbly displayed in the frenetic scherzos of Op 18 — are needle-sharp articulation, stinging accents, wonderful changes of timbre that have the effect of highlighting Beethoven's crazier key-changes, a stunning clarity of texture, and a telepathic rapport that allows the trickiest variations in pace or phrasing to be executed unambiguously. Perhaps the most important of all the Emersons have the capacity to think big, to relish the orchestral dimension in these quartets and their epic emotional demands. The series continues tonight; don't miss out. RICHARD MORRISON

The wood and the trees Philharmonia/Dohnányi Festival Hall

Christoph von Dohnányi makes two appearances with the Philharmonia Orchestra this week, and the first concert on Wednesday brought reminders of his special qualities. Contrasting works by Schoenberg, Mozart and Beethoven were all stamped with individuality, yet in all three he displayed the same meticulous attention to texture while never allowing small detail to obscure his broad view of the musical forms. Dohnányi was thwarted only by the dull playing of Emanuel Ax in Mozart's A Major Piano Concerto, K488. Elsewhere, however, the orchestra, of which he is principal guest conductor, was alert and responsive to his demands. Indeed, he was splendidly served by the 15 players with whom he opened the concert in Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No 1. The piece

sounded misleadingly effortless, but this ease of expression was not achieved at the expense of its organised, coherent structure. Sections of rapt lyricism contrasted with others of tenderness and vigorous, nervous energy — the vital ingredients of this key work in Schoenberg's output (1906) that finds the composer metamorphosing, from a late-Romantic into an Expressionist. While the Emerson Quartet was beginning its Beethoven cycle next door (reviewed above), the composer was also dominating proceedings in the Festival Hall. For this performance of the Seventh Symphony, Dohnányi favoured a large orchestra that crowded the

platform, but there was nothing stodgy about his newly inspiring account of the music. The slow opening was stormy and full of tension that erupted in the ensuing Vivace. The middle movements were carefully shaped and controlled, and the finale driven with brio to an exultant close. There was little of the same spark in the evening's performance of the Mozart. Dohnányi set a gentle pace at the start and drew refined accompaniments from the orchestra, but Ax was a stubborn soloist, in places heavily-handed — a heavy-pedalled in the blurry cadenza — and lacking anything more than generalised Mozartian grace. The Adagio took time to work its ethereal magic. Orchestral attack in the finale was excellent — but outstripping the soloist's brilliance is not what concertos are about. JOHN ALLISON

A great voice in early bloom

One hesitates to plunge into the "star is born" routine — test starlets move in to smooch rising talent away from our beleaguered, low-paying national companies, but there is no denying that this revival of Traviata confirms the blossoming of Claire Rutter as a hugely gifted young soprano. First, the setting that helped her make so thrilling an impact on Wednesday. Richard Armstrong's conducting was free of the smallest whiff of small sentiment; indeed, it was through his brisk, strong-rhythmed, fiercely accented reading that real feeling emerged. There was no Mills & Booney; instead genuinely Verdi anger at a young spirit crushed, a young life wasted. And Armstrong insisted, via a splendidly combative programme note, on performing the score complete, ignoring usual cuts and "improvements" to the orchestration. This makes a great difference, especially in the traditionally hacked-about final act, which becomes the true climax of the drama rather than a doleful, somewhat apologetic appendage to the main action. It was here that Rutter came into her own, not that there



Real Verdian anger: Paul Charles Clarke, Claire Rutter

OPERA La Traviata Theatre Royal, Glasgow

Her soprano is big, bright and athletic — heavier Verdi than this is only just over the horizon — and it is always exciting to hear so healthy an instrument perfectly capable of handling the colouratura of

were thrown off with ease, and all the notes, even the unwritten high E flat, were securely in the voice. Even better, she made the virtuoso writing mean something dramatically: the reinforced, sforzato Cs at the end of Sempre libera spoke vividly of the character's mental turmoil. In the gentler second act she spun long, seamless lines, her tone affectingly pliant when not under pressure, and in the third she used both verses of Addio del passato and the full version of the duet to bring a

her Violetta: the anger and frustration of Gran Dio! Morir si giovane, sung with white-hot passion, was nigh unbearable to witness. She is, as yet, relatively inexperienced on stage, but there was a complete lack of artifice to her performance and a directness of expression that were far more stirring than any amount of technical trickery. She could not have wished for a more supportive Alfredo than Paul Charles Clarke, in more mellifluous voice than when he sang the role for WNO last year and bringing fresh musical insights through imaginative phrasing and variety of dynamics. He "lives" the role with alarming verisimilitude. René Massis was the experienced Germont, decently sung, played perhaps too blackly. The seven-year-old Nuria Espert production, now in the care of Peter Watson, will do, but the casting of small yet important roles such as Arminia, the Doctor and the Marquess is difficult now that companies can no longer maintain permanent ensembles. No criticism of the young singers here, but to flesh out these characters fully it helps to have been around a bit. RODNEY MUIRES

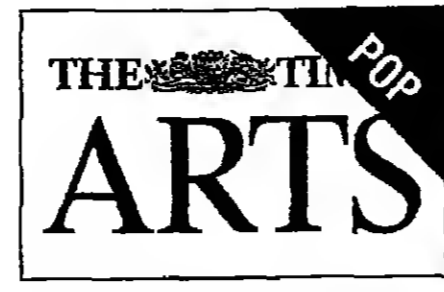
Advertisement for Virgin Atlantic 'Two for one flights' featuring a table of routes and fares, and a booking form.



CHOICE 1
Henryk Gorecki's 'hit' Third Symphony is played in Cardiff
VENUE: Tonight at St David's Hall



CHOICE 2
Noel Coward's classic romance, Private Lives, goes on the road
VENUE: Cheltenham this week, then Liverpool



CHOICE 3
Final weekend for the mesmerising Cheek by Jowl Duchess of Malfi
VENUE: Until tomorrow at Wyndham's Theatre



POP 1
Going up: the Kentucky-born singer Joan Osborne is the hottest tip for fame in 1996

Joan Osborne has gone from bluegrass country to R&B heaven, says David Sinclair

A cowgirl gets the blues

She has been nominated for five Grammys. Her single, *One of Us*, is at No 6 in the American chart and going up. Her face will soon be on the cover of *Rolling Stone*. For most people in Britain the question is still "Joan who?", but for "much longer."

"It is a bit scary," Joan Osborne says, referring to the speed with which her career has taken off. "I was invited to sing with Stevie Wonder at the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame not long ago, which was really frightening. Then I got chased by photographers afterwards. That sort of thing makes me feel as if I've stepped into someone else's life and any minute now I'm going to get kicked out again."



Blue but not seeing red: Joan Osborne — "Anger is not the wellspring of my work"

On the day *One of Us* was released here, Osborne played a set at the 275-capacity Boredome club in London's West End. Only about 50 tickets actually reached the hands of the general public — leaving a queue of long faces outside, while inside there was the highest concentration of record company personnel and media taster-makers assembled for a gig since Black Grape played their London debut.

Clearly in her element, Osborne and her four-piece band rattled through most of the songs on her forthcoming album, *Relish*. With a voice steeped in the traditions of blues and R&B, together with an unusual touch of the Appalachian hillbilly country/gospel style of singing that she thrived in her Kentucky homeland, she roamed a stylistic territory somewhere between the best mainstream American rock and the most accessible boundaries of Southern roots music. From the pensive narrative of *Pensacola* to the funky rhythmic interplay of *Spider Web* and the pounding, skipped-beat swagger of *Right Hand Man* ("If he can't fix it, I don't know who can"), she demonstrated a command of melody and mood that most rock singers with twice her experience would covet.

A tall woman with long, flaxen curls and a fresh complexion, her look is more girl-next-door than rock 'n' roll matriarch, save for the slightly incongruous presence of a small gold ring through her nose. "It hasn't healed properly," she says. "I'm a bit embarrassed by it. I used to live near a lot of Indian shops and businesses in the East Village [of New York] and I was fascinated by the women and the fashions so I just thought I'd have it done. I'm a rock 'n' roll singer. I don't

have to wear a suit or anything."

This is true. But although clearly her own woman, Osborne has little of the sassy bravado that has become the norm among the new breed of female American rock 'n' roll stars. She dresses sensibly, does not stomp or swear and is not on a righteous mission to wreak havoc or revenge. Even her name stands out as strikingly ordinary compared to the likes of Liz Phair, Tori Amos and Alanis Morissette.

"I find it really inspiring that there are women getting good and pissed off when

there's a reason," she says. "You didn't see a lot of that until the past five years or so. But I come from somewhere else. The blues and R&B tradition encompasses a certain amount of anger, but that's not the wellspring of my work."

Born 33 years ago in the small town of Anchorage, Kentucky, Osborne's upbringing gave her little cause to feel angry or alienated. One of six children, she remembers it as a place with lots of woods and horse trails, where everybody knew everybody else and nobody locked their doors — "it

was really an idyllic place to grow up."

She listened with a keen ear to the local black radio stations, but the idea of being a singer never occurred to her until she went to New York University to take a course in documentary film making.

There she started listening to the music of the blues and soul greats — Etta James, Muddy Waters, Otis Redding, Ike and Tina Turner — and, after taking the stage on a whim on an "open mike" night at one of the local blues clubs, she began to perform in earnest.

After several years of stringing cover versions in no-name bars, she recorded *Soul Show*, a live album of original material which she released on her own Womanly Hips label in 1991. In 1992, she put out a three-song EP, *Blue Million Miles*, but the breakthrough came with *Relish*, the album that has already sold a million copies in America.

Written for the most part in conjunction with its producer, Rick Chertoff, along with Eric Bazilian and Rob Hyman of the Hooters, *Relish*, all but reinvents the notion of classic rock. One of the album's most distinctive features is the spiritual dimension which informs the lyrics of songs such as *St Teresa* and *One of Us*.

Osborne was brought up a Catholic, and while she is

It's scary — I feel as if I've stepped into someone else's life

deeply opposed to the Church's attitude to women and homosexuals, she recognises the influence that organised religion has had on her work. "As a child I was attracted to the drama of the incense and the stained-glass windows and the Stations of the Cross around the church and that whole mystical aspect of it. I guess I still am."

She is no puritan (check the lascivious humour of *Lets Just Get Naked*), but many of her songs do speak to an understanding of the world that goes beyond the temporal. In this, her music resembles that of Van Morrison, another of her early influences.

"Most people are somewhat aware of a spiritual side to their nature," she says. "I don't think it's a choice of either you go to church or you don't have any spiritual side at all. I think there are a lot of ways to express that, even if it's just a case of being conscious of the miraculous nature of life itself. It's just something that I think about. Music makes me feel connected with something larger than myself."

One of *Us* is on Mercury Records. *Relish* is released on Feb 26. Joan Osborne plays *Stephens Bush - Empire* with Melissa Etheridge on Tuesday King Tut's Wah Wah Hut, Glasgow, on Feb 19. Hop & Grape, Manchester, Feb 20; Dingwalls, London, Feb 21

LONDON

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI Last chance to see one of the shows of the season. Check by Joan Osborne...
VENUE: Tonight at St David's Hall

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kris Anderson

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM The Emerson String Quartet sandwich a performance of its Bestwood series between two London concerts this weekend...
LEATHERHEAD Tom Corb and Sherrin Chase take the leads in Neil Simon's *Chapter Two*...

LONDON GALLERIES

National Gallery Paintings from National Trust Houses (0171-747 2865)
National Portrait Gallery: Lives of the Londoners (0171-747 2865)
Royal Academy: David Hockney: *Retrospective* (0171-433 7486)

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingdon's assessment of theatre showing in London
House full, returns only Seats at all prices

LONDON INTERNATIONAL

THE FIELDS OF AMBROSIA American musical with book and lyrics by Alan Bergman...
THE TOWER Alexander Dumas' high romantic melodrama goes away over the top for most modern tastes...

LONG RUNNERS

Blood Brothers (0171-467 1044)
Grease (0171-418 6090)
Les Misérables (0171-434 3300)

NEW RELEASES

THE FLOWER OF MY SECRET (15) Cries point for a woman writer of romantic fiction...
HEAT (15) LA detective Al Pacino tries to catch Robert De Niro's crooked cop...

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where applicable) with the symbol (P) on release across the country
Centre (0171-439 4470) Tottenham Court Road (0171-436 6148)

CURRENT

DANGEROUS MINDS (15) Michelle Pfeiffer plays a woman in an inner-city school...
THE FIELDS OF AMBROSIA (15) A New Musical "A stirring score"...

ART GALLERIES

LARGE MUSEUM PAINTINGS FROM RUSSIA
ROY MILES GALLERY, 29 Bruton Street, W1

ART GALLERIES

Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, 0171-734 4000
DAVID HOCKNEY: A DRAWING RETROSPECTIVE

THEATRES

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS
"AN ABSOLUTE WINNER" Times
INSPECTOR CALLS
"ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING, THEATRICAL, BRAGGARTS OF THE YEAR"

ART GALLERIES

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS
"AN ABSOLUTE WINNER" Times
INSPECTOR CALLS
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"ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING, THEATRICAL, BRAGGARTS OF THE YEAR"

ART GALLERIES

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صكراحت الاصل



POP 2

Punk is alive, brash and noisy on Rocket From the Crypt's abrasive album *Scream, Dracula, Scream!*



POP 3

Assembled on one disc for the benefit of his new young fans: the 'best' of Burt Bacharach

THE TIMES POP ARTS



POP 4

Gene's ragbag of a new album confirms why they are not in the van of the Britpop brigade



POP 5

Strange brew: epic doses of 'post-rock' confirms why Tortoise's album *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*

Your mother should know

VARIOUS ARTISTS
The Look of Love - The Classic Songs of Burt Bacharach (Polygram TV 535 190)
SO, THE word on the street is that easy-listening is hip, and cheesy is chic. In a bizarre turn of events, the melodically impoverished children of the techno generation have apparently taken a shine to the music of their grandparents. Forget Moby and the Chemical Brothers; Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra and Matt Monro are the "new" names to drop. Call me old-fashioned, but it was in order to avoid these people that I started listening to pop music in the first place.

Now comes *The Look of Love*, a compilation of songs written by two of the biggest cheeses of them all, Burt Bacharach and Hal David (although David's contribution seems to have been quietly airbrushed out of the new Bacharach mythology). And just because I can hum virtually every tune on the album does not mean I wish to hear any of them again now.

Sill, here on one handy disc are the songs that have driven lift engineers and supermarket staff to distraction for 30 years or more: *The Look of Love*, *Do You Know the Way to San José*, *Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head*, *Trains and Boats and Planes*, *Alfie*, *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*, *You'll Never Get to Heaven (If You Break My Heart)* and many more.

Although these are the original recordings by the stars who made them hits in the first place - Dusty Springfield, Dionne Warwick, B.J. Thomas, Billy J. Kramer, Cilla Black, Bobby Gentry, the Stylistics and all the rest - the assaults which these songs have suffered nightly in cocktail lounges and karaoke bars the world over have inevitably taken their toll.

And to think we went through two Woodstocks for this.

GENE
To See the Lights (Costermonger GENE2)

THEY have put a brave face on it, but after all the big talk at the time, Gene must surely have been disappointed that last year's debut album,

NEW ALBUMS:
Burt Bacharach's cheese is a hit again with the kids, but not with David Sinclair

Olympian, failed to put them in the front rank of the Britpop brigade.

Perhaps fearful of losing momentum while work proceeds on the follow-up, they now release *To See the Lights*, a stopgap collection of deleted singles, B-sides, radio sessions and dodgy live recordings of the kind that most acts only get around to assembling after they have split up.

At their best, as on the dreamy (and much sought-after) first single *For the Dead*, or the more upbeat *Sick, Sober & Sorry*, they elegantly combine the melancholy wit of the Smiths with the jaunty guitar sound of the Faces. At their worst, as on a live version of the Bacharach and David song *I Say a Little Prayer for You*, they sound like any old bar band with a less than average singer.

Committed fans will enjoy poring over this stuff for now. But, to get any further, Gene will need to achieve a lot more consistency and originality with the next batch of material, if and when it comes.

ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT
Scream, Dracula, Scream! (Elemental ELM34)

RECENTLY, most American punk has been suspiciously well-tailored for the teen marketplace. But despite their cartoonish qualities and a brazen commitment to entertain, *Rocket From the Crypt* are the real deal.

A six-man group from San Diego boasting a horn section and led by a singer and guitarist called Speedo, they have distilled a super-propulsive sound from a range of influences, most obviously Iggy Pop, the Clash and Graham Parker and the Rumour. Exploding out of the traps like a rodeo bull, *Scream, Dracula, Scream!* be-

gins with a swift, one-minute burst of yobbo chanting called *Middle*, followed immediately by the hurrying bacchanal of *Born In '69* with its flagship chorus: "I want it, (Whoah, yeah) I need it (Whoah, yeah), I'll steal it (Alright!)"

With nothing remotely resembling a ballad or slow song in sight, the album maintains its ballistic trajectory, delivering a barrage of thrusting riffs and exhilarating choruses before arriving, breathless but unbowed, at its finishing point 14 tracks and 43 minutes later. It's a gloriously vital, noisy and clever piece of work, and not a Bacharach song in sight.

TORTOISE
Millions Now Living Will Never Die (City Slang EFA 04972)

THE "post-rock" conceptualist ensemble from Chicago, Tortoise, do not travel on the fast track. Exhibiting a lofty disregard for conventional song structures, their wholly instrumental second album kicks off with *Djed*, a 20-minute wander round the houses that takes in elements of Krautrock, dub-techno and systems music.

On the more conventional-sounding *Glass Museum* and *The Tent and Tome* they negotiate the sort of grandiose themes and tricky time signatures that have exercised the talents of progressive-rock bands from King Crimson to Ozric Tentacles, while *Along the Banks of Rivers* is a contrastingly simple excursion into the pop-noir world of trip-hop twang.

Their willingness to stretch and shape their music across unlikely boundaries is laudable, and produces many isolated flashes of inspiration. But the album sounds patchy and suffers from a rather desultory feel overall.



Rocket From the Crypt: an exhilarating mixture of Iggy Pop, the Clash and Graham Parker and the Rumour

BLUES

These boys can play

John Hammond/ Duke Robillard
Borderline, WC2

THERE have been enough histories of the blues written to fill a small library. John Hammond and fellow American guitarist Duke Robillard provided their own with a set which took a capacity audience from the Mississippi Delta to urban Chicago.

Hammond, as befits an artist whose father booked Robert Johnson for Carnegie Hall (death, alas, intervened) supplied the first chapter with a solo acoustic set. His heartfelt, sometimes eerie vocals and stringing bottleneck guitar conjured up a style of prewar blues most of us only know from record.

In contrast, chapter two - courtesy of Robillard, sax man Gordon Beadle and acoustic bass-player Marty Ballou - plunged the audience straight into the juke joints of Texas and Los Angeles with the music of Joe Turner, B.B. King and Robillard's personal hero, T-Bone Walker. Technically superb, Robillard played with a swing and a restraint too often lacking in blues performers.

The final chapter had Hammond joining Robillard on stage for the Jimmy Reed title track of Hammond's new album, *Found Love*, plus a joyful tribute to two founding fathers of rock'n'roll: Bo Diddley's *Diddley Daddy* and a song Hammond confessed he had been playing for ever, Chuck Berry's *Nodine*.

Can white men play the blues? Hammond and Robillard did - and won by a more than convincing margin.

JOHN CLARKE

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- 1 *What's the Story* Morning Glory?..... Oasis (Creation)
- 2 *Different Class*..... Pulp (Island)
- 3 *Jagged Little Pill*..... Alanis Morissette (Maverick)
- 4 *First Love*..... Michael Ball (Columbia)
- 5 *Robson & Jerome*..... Robson & Jerome (RCA)
- 6 *Boys for Pele*..... Toni Amos (East West)
- 7 *HIStory*..... Michael Jackson (Epic)
- 8 *Said and Done*..... Boyzone (Polydor)
- 9 *Something to Remember*..... Madonna (Maverick)
- 10 *All Change*..... Cast (Polydor)

Carapace at the gates of dawn

Tortoise are very, very strange. The twitching, pulsing signature changes that made Carla Bley's *Escalator over the Hill* and John Coltrane's most spaced-out, arrhythmic wallings so compulsive are the under-carriage for lonely synthesizers and what sounds like a food-mixer being kicked down a flight of stairs.

There's nothing so crass as tunes or vocals; just endless, 16-second symphonies strung together haphazardly, like those junk-jewellery necklaces your mother would let you make with the contents of her bunton box and a length of twine. Think of the shock you received when first listening to My Bloody Valentine or Bark Psychosis. This, like theirs, is music that sounds as if it's emanating from the body, rather than through an amp or microphone: swirls of adrenalin, weird gurgling digestive sounds and the heart beating constantly away, like a fuzzy, distorted bass-drum. This is definitely, defiantly not Britpop.

Of course, the problem with these arty, prog-jazz experimental musicians is that they are utterly struck dumb by their muses, and find stringing a sentence together very difficult. Johnny, the keyboard player, drummer and vibraphone master of Tortoise, is trying to explain their second album, *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, and the ethos behind the floating membership of the band.

For me, it's like being sucked back into the dark days of shoe-gazing - 15 bands and not a quote between them. Take a simple, ordinary, standard interview question like "What would you do if Tortoise became the centre of a huge bidding war, and you were eventually signed to EMI for £1 million? What would you spend the money on?" "Well," Johnny ponders, "I

Tortoise don't write tunes or sing songs. Instead, they make me cry



Tortoise, the band that likes to say: "Experiment"

don't think that will happen. We're kinda too weird."

No, but imagine. Pretend. "Well, I think we're too uncommercial for EMI. They'd never sign us."

It's a hypothetical question. Just pretend. Like a dream.

"Well, they just wouldn't."

Please. Fantasise. "Well, if I, like, won a million or something, then I guess I'd, uh, give some to my parents, and buy a new snare drum... or maybe some recording equipment."

get to Noel Gallagher. We're talking about the weird, 20-second sections between songs that sound exactly like someone's put a bauxite sandwich in the CD player and it's about to explode. "That's accidental," Johnny effervesces. "We didn't know how to link the tracks, and we had maybe three dozen four-inch pieces of tape on the studio floor, and we stuck them all together and it sounded like a lightning-bolt had hit the mixing desk - the kind of sound you could only find by accident. That's one of the things about Tortoise: things should be accidental, and things should be educational."

What, you have little pub-quizzes about Charlie Mingus

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EDUCATION

What the Harriet Harman row tells us about education policy — and why another parent echoes her decision

Enough to try the patience of St Olave

It is time to stop shouting and address real issues, says Denis MacShane

If all the comments and columns written this week were pasted together and sent to every parent, teacher, child and politician, would the cause of improving England's under-performing school system be advanced one iota? A visitor from the Continent or Asia would simply blink with amazement at the posturing from all political sides and ask when the English were going to stop shouting slogans and insults at each other and get down to serious debate.

I was ashamed to be an MP on Monday night as a debate about nursery school vouchers was transformed into an Orwellian hate session by ministers and backbenchers whose only purpose was to tear at the flesh of Harriet Farman. To be sure, her decision to prioritise her duty as a parent is open to legitimate political criticism but there was something foul and unhealthy in the desire of ministers and their followers to shut aside discussion about the provision of nursery places in order to hound her.



Would any other country allow education to be reduced to the chanting of simple slogans about choice versus comprehensives?

would be my right as a citizen to expect high-standard teaching in public education. The crisis of maths teaching should have been debated in Parliament, but England's immutable adversarial system of yah-boo politics does not permit such debate. So tomorrow, with the help of BT, I have organised a debate in Rotherham on England's educational needs. David Blunkett will make one keynote speech, as will Professor Brian Cox, editor of the "Black Papers" on education.

On Saturday afternoon there will be a proper debate on the subject of selection and vouchers in schools. Speaking in favour will be Stephen Pollard, of the Fabian Society, and speaking against will be Alan Howarth, the former Tory Education Minister. From the clash of their views will come, I hope, some synthesis about how children are guided to the best pathways for their abilities and how all this might be paid for.

Various nieces and nephews have gone through the French and Swiss school systems and were never obliged to take an exam at 11, which would have divided them into the sheep and goats beloved of the Darwinian selectionists now buying for a return to the grammar school-secondary modern divide of the 1950s. To be sure, there is streaming and guidance on the Continent, and a much stronger commitment to technical training which does not have the oily hands, second-class image of apprenticeship and vocational formation that it does in England. It is easier to switch between schools and choices are made at 13 or older, not the absurdly early age of 11.

Education policy-makers in Whitehall be humble enough to admit they might be able to learn from other countries? Tomorrow, teachers, parents and the business leaders of Rotherham and South Yorkshire will be able to decide for themselves what might be the best way forward for the English national educational system. I deliberately write system, in the singular, because the key lesson from our more successful European and Asian competitor-partners is that education cannot be reduced to a set of competing, winner-and-loser institutions based on the nostrums of the market-place in which money is lord of all.

BLAIR ROCKED BY CLASS WAR
PRESCOTT RAGES AT HARRIET
Short stirs Labour education row
Labour fury at Harman 'hypocrisy'
CAN HARRIET NOW SURVIVE?

Labour voters want the best for their children, too

I have a confession to make: like Harriet Harman, I am also the mother of one of the four "high flyers" who passed this year's entrance examination to St Olave's School from Dulwich Hamlet. Without the need to maintain a high political profile, I could be said not to have to worry about the implications of such a decision. But as a Labour-voting teacher in the inner city for 16 years, I am aware that some of my friends and colleagues will be raising an eyebrow when told about this good fortune.

For a left-wing iff, indeed, a Labour voter may still be thus described) parent living in London to opt for selective education is neither hypocritical nor confused: it is a pragmatic choice to make. Pragmatic politicians I find reassuring: it is ideologies I find worrying. Ms Harman's son has been accused of taking a place in this "Kent" school away from a more local pupil. In fact, St Olave's has been hijacked by the London Borough of Bromley, where it is now situated, having been founded "through charitable effort of the people of Southwark for its 'younglings' — of which, Joseph, a resident of Southwark, is one. If young Joseph were female, he could have gone to St Olave's sister school, situated in the politically correct, if aesthetically unappealing, Old Kent Road, and all would have been well.



The seal of St Olave's

If inner-city schools often have poor exam results and a level of violence that no caring parent would knowingly want to unleash on their offspring, it is not the fault of the teachers, but a direct outcome of the implicit values of our society — a perception that might be right, and that you are what you drive, rather than what drives you. A Labour Government will need to reverse the damage done. But in the meantime, should each sacrificial child of a Labour politician be sent to a Hackney Downs? From my own experience of a comprehensive school in the then communist Poland, from which 95 per cent of my classmates went to university, I know that comprehensives can deliver and I believe in the principle of comprehensive education. But what Poland had then, unlike Britain now, was a social consensus in a practically classless and homogeneous society that education is a "good thing". Education had genuine currency in a society without a welfare safety net, but with 100 per cent employment. Also, education had a great snob value. Peasant or

Meritocracy for all must be the watchword for the 21st century. But this does not exclude the possibility of an educational fast track for those fit and willing. St Olave's is not a fee-paying school. Entry is by examination only, regardless of class, race, wealth or status. Having become the laughing stock of the developed countries because of our sub-literate and innumerate youth, we could do with a few intellectual fast bowlers. Poland is one of those countries where people talk in jokes when they mean serious business (a cunning self-censorship device, acquired under communism, but useful in any totalitarian regime). There is a Polish joke which goes: a trainee devil is shown round Hell by a senior supervisor. They pass through various sections. In each, the devil on duty busily prods and pokes the mass of wriggling bodies in each sizzling cauldron to stop any from climbing out. They happen upon a cauldron with no devil present. "Why is there no one on duty?" asks the young devil. "No need," comes the reply. "This is the Polish section. When anyone climbs anywhere near the top, the rest will soon pull him down again." The British section does not need a devil either.

ANDA MACBRIDE

When Jessica joined the workers

Jonathan Sale describes how his daughter took up a work placement — and learnt an adult lesson

My 15-year-old daughter stopped going to school and went off instead to a hostel for the homeless. One of her contemporaries, also in the throes of the GCSE course, spent a fortnight in the local police station and others ended up in hospital. Is this something for Jessica's school to be proud of? Yes. It takes work experience very seriously. Everyone does these days; one lad with a placement at Bradford Royal Infirmary was allowed not only to watch an operation but to help to look after patients.

Sydenham School, the south London comprehensive where Jessica is studying for her GCSEs, has had several recent placements at hospitals but none quite as hands-on as that. Several years ago, when one of the pupils fainted while watching an operation, she asked groggily, "Where am I?" on coming round. "Intensive care," she said.



Experience for a would-be engineer

She had to act in some ways like a member of staff but could always turn to her cousin or another of the employees. She was able to give practical help, such as booking a dentist's appointment for one of the older residents. Other work involved doing the laundry or playing cards with residents. Perhaps her greatest satisfaction — it makes me look at my youngest child in a new light — lay in having a certain amount of authority. To those residents that she knew best, she could say: "Put that cigarette butt in the ashtray" — and they did.

Her friend, Yaa Kudom, had a rather different placement. In her project diary, Yaa wrote that the organisation where she had her work experience "provides an important service to people living in the country". That is a generous opinion of the House of Commons but then the House of Commons had a generous opinion of her. "She is quietly confident, articulate and clearly has high aspirations," said the office supervisor of the Labour MP Diane Abbott. This is what Yaa's first day

Books to help with tests

YESTERDAY'S disappointing results from the first national tests at 11 will increase the pressure on parents and schools to prepare children more effectively this year. Three books published last week and sponsored by The Times should aid that process. As well as providing a revision guide for the tests in May, the paperbacks will enable parents to make their own assessment of their children's progress in the three core subjects. Produced by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, the body responsible for the tests, the separate books on English, mathematics and science offer advice on revision and examination techniques, as well as sample questions at all levels of difficulty. Unlike rival publications, they contain actual questions from last year's tests. The three books, which are published by HMSO, will form the basis of a series of articles on this year's tests at ages seven, 11 and 14. The series will appear in The Times in March. Some changes will be introduced in this year's tests for 11-year-olds, including the banning of calculators in one mathematics paper. However, the general appearance of the tests and the ground to be covered will alter little. Schools will be notified of the precise differences.

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Further details of the post and of the School may be obtained from David Whitaker FCA, Clerk to the Governors, Leighton Park School, Reading RG2 7DH (Tel: 01734 871370, Fax: 01734 866959) and applications should be received by 16 February 1996.

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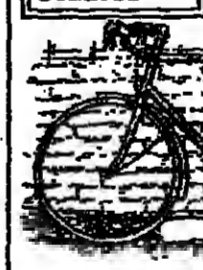
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Asprilla heads for Newcastle and more controversy

By DAVID MADDOCK

FAUSTINO ASPRILLA was heading for Newcastle last night, intent on completing drawn-out negotiations over his proposed £6.7 million transfer to Newcastle United Football Club.

must report, monthly, to his nearest Colombian consulate as part of his release arrangements. It is a situation which has aroused the interest of the immigration authorities.

controversy and his acquisition by Newcastle has raised a few eyebrows within football. He leaves Parma under a cloud after a dispute with the Italian club's coach and general manager.

last night, intent on forging a new career in England. "He was due to fly to Milan and then on to London," a spokesman said.

midfield player, learnt that he will face a charge, in a Rome court early in October, of assault on a photographer in an incident in the city two years ago.

we will certainly be contesting this one," Stein said. "It is outrageous. We consider that time and time again, Paul was subjected to an invasion of privacy under Italian law, and that is a matter we will be pursuing."

Bugner's bid to mount title challenge ruled out

By SRIKUMAR SEN BOXING CORRESPONDENT

JOE BUGNER'S application to challenge Scott Welch, of Shoreham, for the Commonwealth heavyweight championship has been turned down by the Commonwealth Boxing Council.

Warren has told the British Boxing Board of Control of his intention to stage the WBO international contest, but the promoter has yet to hear whether Bugner will be given a permit to box in Britain.

John Morris, the secretary of the British board, said yesterday, however: "I personally don't think it's good for boxing to go through the Joe Bugner syndrome again. But the Board will consider any application."

Warren said: "I don't see how the board can stop him boxing for the WBO international title. The WBO have agreed. I can't see any problem with the fight if Bugner is medically fit. They can reject him only on medical grounds."

"It's a good fight against Welch, a 50-50 fight. Nobody is saying it's a bad match. All they are saying is: 'How old is he?' I cannot see them rejecting him because of his age if he is medically fit; look at Andries, Foreman and Holmes. But I've always gone along when fighters have not passed medicals."

Bugner was stopped by Frank Bruno when he last boxed in Britain, in 1987.

Huber taken aback by final chance

FROM STUART JONES, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT, IN MELBOURNE

IN HER assessment of the hierarchy of the women's game, Monica Seles made one undiplomatic omission in an otherwise predictable list. She failed to mention the name of Anke Huber, the 21-year-old German who is to oppose her in the final of the Australian Open.

There is a danger, as Huber herself admitted, that she may be treated equally dismissively on the court tomorrow. In their six previous matches, she has not taken a set, even when Seles was feeling her way during her competitive comeback at the Canadian Open five months ago.

It was then, amid all the hoopla, that Seles confessed that the Australian Open would be her first realistic chance of collecting another grand-slam title, her ninth. She almost ran ahead of her own schedule, reaching the final of the US Open, where she submitted in three sets to Steffi Graf.

As Germany's No 1 is absent through injury, Germany's No 2 has filled the role of challenger. Huber was taken aback on two counts. First, on her own behalf: "This is a big surprise," she said after eliminating Amanda Coetzer, a fellow member of the top 20. Curiously, they had never met before.

Secondly, Huber thought that Seles's unbeaten record, not only in the championships

but also in Australia, should have been ended by the revelation of the fortnight.

Chanda Rubin, as well as establishing a record for durability in the semi-final against Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, was on the verge of creating more indelible history.

The 19-year-old held two points to lead 5-1 in the final set and served for the match at 5-3. Her nerves did not fail her; nor were they likely to. She has, after all, successfully endured the longest women's matches here and at Wimbledon. Instead she was let

Flinders Park results — 37

down by the policy which, at deuce, took her to within a couple of points of her finest victory. She took her natural aggression too far. "I still tried to go for it," she said, "but I couldn't close it out."

One point, in particular, she would happily replay. At 5-3 and 30-15, she told herself to make sure of the first service. After disobeying the advice, her second attempt was not only also long but unnecessarily fiery. At 153kph, it was faster than any of Huber's later in the afternoon.

Yet Rubin recognised the futility of diffidence. "If you don't dictate, she will," she said. The theory had been graphically illustrated during

the second set. The American, serving at 2-1 and 40-30, retreated to a defensive position and conceded 16 points in a row.

With her powerful service and forehand, Rubin is armed with the weapons to infiltrate the top ten. All she needs is the belief that she can be more than a mere contender. Significantly, her ambitions at present lie no further than "winning a tournament on the Tour this year."

Coetzer, after being defeated by Seles in the final of the Canadian Open, suggested that the world's joint No 1 would not be so dominant once she and her peers had been come accustomed to her style. So it has proved. Lindsay Davenport, for instance, held a match point against Seles in Sydney a fortnight ago.

Seles is more vulnerable than her rivals might have previously imagined. Having committed only four unforced errors in the first set, for instance, she made three during the tie-break to allow Rubin to assume control. Moreover, the comparatively inexperienced American was responsible for yielding the crucial points in the closing stages through her adventurous strategy rather than Seles taking the initiative.

Stefan Edberg, who was eliminated from the singles in the second round, earned himself a last hurrah. Having announced that he is to retire this year, he and Petr Korda went through to the final of the doubles by beating the No 4 seeds, Patrick Galbraith and Andrei Olhovskiy, in three sets.

Martin Lee and James Trotman, the Wimbledon boys' doubles champions and seeded No 2 here, went through to the semi-final. Both of them were eliminated prematurely in the singles, but in defeating Andrea Capodimonte and Dario Sciorino, of Italy, the No 6 seeds, they earned themselves some compensation.



Huber drives a double-handed backhand during her three-set victory over Coetzer in Melbourne yesterday

West Indies lose Hooper

WEST Indies' hopes of winning the cricket World Cup were seriously weakened yesterday when Carl Hooper, their leading all-rounder, was suddenly withdrawn from the 14-man party for the tournament that opens on February 14 (Simon Wilde writes).

The reasons for the decision, as given in a statement issued by the West Indies Cricket Board of Control, were sufficiently vague to invite comparisons with the last-minute withdrawal of Brian Lara last month from the team to visit Australia. The statement referred to Hooper's "mental and physical state" during the past year but gave no further details.

The move was initiated by Hooper himself, who pulled out of the Guyana side for a Red Stripe Cup match in which he had to appear to fulfil his contractual obligations for the World Cup. Unlike Lara, Hooper, Kent's overseas player, appears to have been quick to apologise for causing inconvenience. He has asked for the chance to serve the team again, although he will not play against New Zealand when they tour the Caribbean after the World Cup. Hooper's place has gone, rather unexpectedly, to a fast bowler, Cameron Cuffey.

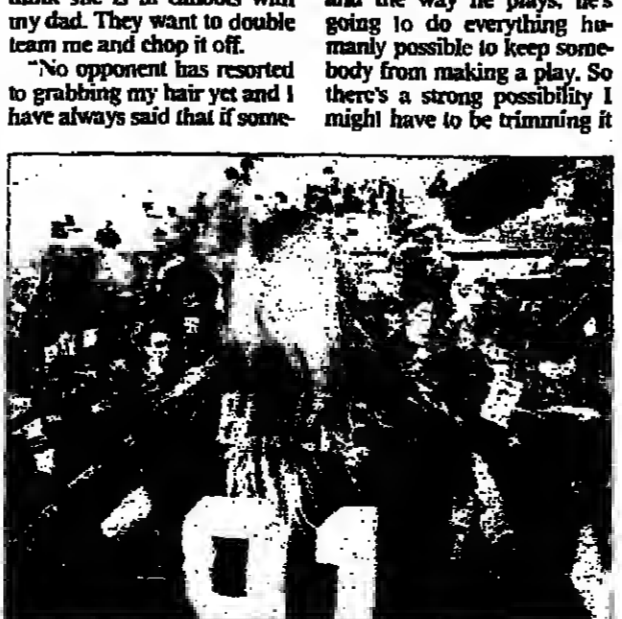
Greene ready for hair-raising event

The American lust for sporting firsts that reaches its fevered height during the Super Bowl is preparing to be sated by a particularly unusual statistic this year. Kevin Greene, a key linebacker for the Pittsburgh Steelers in the match against the Dallas Cowboys here in Phoenix on Sunday, may be about to become the first player to have his hair cut during the game.

Greene, 33, whose job is to try to disrupt the brilliant Cowboys offence, rebelled against his father, who was a colonel in the US Army, and ignored the pleas of his wife, Tara, when he vowed last year not to cut his blond hair until the Steelers had played in the Super Bowl. It now cascades down over his shoulders, making him one of the most immediately recognisable players in the sport.

But Greene, who grew up on military bases in North America and Germany and is a tank commander in the Army reserve, admitted yesterday that he may be forced to shear off his locks during the game if Erik Williams, the most notoriously rough offensive tackle in the National Football League, resorts to pulling his hair to stop him making important plays.

"I want to win this thing as the game is going on. We'll cross that bridge when we come to it." Greene's quandary comes against a backdrop of his Super Bowl issues. Neil O'Donnell, the Steelers quarterback, had confessed that he was under pressure from his agent to shave off his beard before the game. The agent, Leigh Steinberg, said a clean-shaven look would make O'Donnell appear "more accessible" but his client resisted his overtures.



Greene's flowing blond locks have become his trademark

Oliver Holt uncovers a player bracing himself for the chop at the Super Bowl

before I cut these locks," Greene said at the Sun Devil Stadium, where the match will be played. "The wife will be ready. I think she's going to have the scissors with her. She's going to come on the field and start chopping as soon as the game is over. I think she is in cahoots with my dad. They want to double team me and chop it off."

"No opponent has resorted to grabbing my hair yet and I have always said that if someone does and it keeps me from making a play then it's not worth having it long and I'd have it cut. If anybody's going to grab it, it might be the Cowboys. The only way I'll be able to keep Erik Williams's hands out of my face is to keep a chainsaw in my back pocket and the way he plays, he's going to do everything humanly possible to keep somebody from making a play. So there's a strong possibility I might have to be trimming it

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No 688

- ACROSS: 1 Trinidad companion island (6); 4 Reply please! (1,1,1,1); 9 Sound (the hour) (5); 10 Maurice --, 20C Paris painter (7); 11 Fairy Queen (MND) (7); 12 Small padded boat (5); 13 Love potion (11); 17 Of hearing (5); 19 Treat with deference; a detail (7); 22 Soluble medicine-dose case (7); 23 Less wet (5); 24 Simple board/dice game (4); 25 Gertrude -- and Hyde (6).

The solution to 687 will be published Wednesday, January 31

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Critics fear Yeltsin's choice of 'dinosaur' to run financial policy may turn back the clocks

Kremlin puts industrialist at helm of ailing economy

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin yesterday appointed a controversial industrialist to head Russia's economic policy, prompting renewed fears about the Kremlin's commitment to reforming the economy.

Vladimir Kadannikov, 54, who headed Russia's largest car producer, was appointed Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the economy to replace Anatoli Chubais, the pro-Western reformer who masterminded the country's privatisation programme.

The move, although predicted, was greeted with widespread disappointment in the business community and could delay, or even derail, a \$9 billion (£6 billion) IMF loan due to be finalised by the end of this month.

"This week Yeltsin made a point of telling Western investors how committed he was to reform," said one banker. "Then he goes and appoints this dinosaur to run the economy. What does he expect us to think?"

The threat of a U-turn in Russian economic policy, away from reform and back towards protectionism and government subsidies, was already signalled by Oleg Soskovets, the First Deputy Prime Minister, who on Wednesday stated that Western-

style economic practices did not suit Russia.

The Kremlin's apparent change of policy seems aimed at wooing disaffected voters away from the Communists, who came out ahead in last month's parliamentary polls, and back to President Yeltsin, in time for his re-election bid in June.

However, the tactic of substituting loss-making industries, increasing pensions and freezing reforms could backfire badly if inflation rises and the stabilised ruble begins once again to lose its value.

Anticipating criticism from Russian liberals and a possible

backlash in the markets, President Yeltsin moved quickly to ease fears, by reconfirming that he regarded economic reform as "the most important thing" in his political life. "I do not intend to betray it," he said in a speech to students last night. He also made a bold pledge on timely payments. "Beginning on March 1, I am talking under my personal control the timely payment of wages, students' stipends and pensions," he told the audience.

However, his reassurances on economic reform failed to make much impact with Western investors in Russia who regarded Mr Chubais as a guarantor of reform and who view Mr Kadannikov as an old-style Soviet factory boss more interested in subsidising and protecting Russian industry than modernising it.

"Reforms must be systematically adjusted to life," he said, hinting at a slowdown or halt to the privatisation process. "We cannot talk about the successful completion of reform without lifting the domestic branches of industry."

Russian commentators have been widely critical of Mr Kadannikov, not least because of the terrible state of AvtoVAZ, the giant carmaker he used to run. Although the

Volga-based company still produces vehicles and manages to pay its 100,000-man workforce, unlike many other Russian industries, it has failed to adapt to modern market realities. It is heavily in debt, dangerously infiltrated by the mafia and its cars are widely regarded as unreliable, outdated and overpriced. "Look what is happening to VAZ and you will understand what will happen to Russia," said Andrei Ilyarov, an economist.

In spite of his poor managerial skills, Mr Kadannikov has proved a skilful player in Moscow, where he has maintained close links with powerful figures in the Kremlin, including President Yeltsin, who considered him for Prime Minister in 1992.

As the Russian leader has steadily purged his Government of reform-minded liberals, so the opportunity arose for Mr Kadannikov to return to mainstream politics.

According to some Russian press reports, he was supported for his new job by General Aleksandr Kozhakov, the shadowy and powerful presidential bodyguard, and Mr Soskovets, the anti-reformist who has pledged to restore Russian industry by state intervention.

After a day of heated debate over the state of democracy and Russia's intervention in Chechnya, the Council of Europe yesterday voted overwhelmingly to admit Russia as its 39th member.

Parliamentarians from East and West rejected pleas by opponents to keep Russia waiting with the other three

applicant countries - Croatia, Bosnia and Belorussia - and voted by 164 to 35 to admit the Russians immediately. There were 15 abstentions. The motion had to be carried by a two-thirds majority.

The Council is seen as the yardstick and guarantor of democratic freedoms and human rights throughout Europe. Conservative and centre-right parliamentarians, as well as speakers from the Baltic states, denounced Russia's actions in Chechnya and the lawlessness of Russian society. Socialists and Liberals from East and West gave a warning that keeping Russia waiting would hinder democratic and market reforms and only encourage the Communists and nationalists.



Gennadi Zyuganov, the Russian Communist Party leader, enters the assembly room in Strasbourg

Council of Europe admits Russia

FROM MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, IN STRASBOURG

After a day of heated debate over the state of democracy and Russia's intervention in Chechnya, the Council of Europe yesterday voted overwhelmingly to admit Russia as its 39th member.

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That prediction was given extraordinary emphasis by a furious denunciation from Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the ultra-nationalist leader of the Liberal Democratic Party. He called Russia a haven of freedom and democracy while insisting that the West was hell on earth. Paradoxically, however, he begged the Council members to vote against Russia, saying that this would bolster his contention that the West was Russia's enemy.

Shouting and red in the face, Mr Zhirinovskiy said Russia had protected Europe for more than a thousand years from Asian hordes and Turkish invaders; it had liberated the West from the German yoke in the Second World War; and it was now saving Europe from Chechen barbarians.

He said it was futile to criticise President Yeltsin for his military operation against the Chechens. Mr Yeltsin was in fact too soft-hearted, and Mr Zhirinovskiy predicted that after the presidential elections in June the Kremlin would take a far tougher stance.

Mr Zhirinovskiy, who

caused scandal in Strasbourg three years ago during a Council of Europe debate when he spat and threw clods of earth at Jews demonstrating against him, accused the West of hypocrisy in admitting countries such as Turkey which bombed Kurdish villages, and Germany, which burnt Turks in hostels.

Western parliamentarians, however, said that democracy could be nurtured only if the country was given Western support. Sir Russell Johnston, for the Liberal Group, said that for a thousand years Russia had had no free press, free elections or independent judiciary. Now it had them, albeit imperfectly.

Mr Yeltsin made clear earlier this week the overriding importance Moscow saw in admission. His opponents, however, said that keeping Russia waiting was the best way of ensuring it undertook human rights and democratic reforms. Chechnya showed that Russia was not ready for membership.

Vladimir Lukin, the leader of the Russian delegation, warned the Council not to play Pontius Pilate and wash its hands of responsibility.

Mitterrand mistress 'was phone tap victim'

FROM SUSAN BELL IN PARIS

THE telephone of Anne Pingeot, Francois Mitterrand's mistress and the mother of his illegitimate daughter, Mazarine, was tapped in the early 1980s by police at the Elysee Palace, almost certainly with President Mitterrand's knowledge, according to a book published in France yesterday.

However, according to *The Ears of the President*, by Jean-Marie Pontaut and Jerome Dupuis, both investigative journalists, Mitterrand's wife, Danielle, escaped surveillance. *The Ears of the President* is the latest in what promises to be a stream of books on the secretive President's political career and private life, following his death earlier this month.

Telephone-tapping has long been used in French politics, and it has been known for some time that the Elysee engaged in widespread, illegal spying during President Mitterrand's first seven years in office.

M Pontaut and M Dupuis say that between 1983 and 1986, the telephone lines of 2,000 people were tapped by the Elysee. Among the targets were 128 journalists; 30 lawyers; five magistrates; the Aga Khan; Martine Aubry, the former Socialist Minister; Carole Bouquet, an actress; a nightclub; and a cleaning company.

The authors also say that, when a radio station threatened to reveal details of the President's illegitimate daughter in 1982, two agents of the phone-tapping unit were sent to cut the wires of the station's transmitter. A legal investigation into the phone tapping continues.

Charges over death unit stun Socialists

FROM EDWARD OWEN IN MADRID

THE decision by the Spanish Supreme Court to charge Jose Barrionuevo, a close friend of Felipe Gonzalez, the Prime Minister, with the full extent of directing death squads has stunned the Socialist Party.

The party, which has been in power for more than 13 years, is trailing the conservative Popular Party in the run-up to general elections on March 3. The opposition expects to win the election as a result of the indictment.

The Socialists had assumed that, at worst, Senor Barrionuevo, 53, would only be charged as an accessory to a bungled kidnapping in southwest France in 1983, when they mistook a French businessman for an ETA leader. The squads killed 27 ETA suspects during Senor Barrionuevo's term as Interior Minister from 1982 to 1988.

Yesterday Judge Eduardo Moner formally charged Senor Barrionuevo along with Rafael Vera, 50, the former director of state security. Both were freed on bail and their passports impounded. Judge Moner said the death squads, known as Gal, were formed in 1983 by Julian Sancristobal, then Governor of the Basque province of Vizcaya, and other senior officials. He said Gal had received "the consent" of Senor Barrionuevo and Senor Vera and they were integrated in Gal "as directors".

Jose Maria Aznar, 42, the conservative leader, said: "It is impossible to think that the Prime Minister did not know all this was going on." Senor Gonzalez retreated yesterday that "I believe in his [Senor Barrionuevo's] innocence".

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Icy walk for Utah child killer to execution chamber

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN BLUFFDALE, UTAH

ON THE day scheduled to be John Albert Taylor's last, a foot of pristine snow landed on the roof of his execution chamber. Prison guards shovelled it to clear a path for his only relative, an uncle. Lawyers trudged through it to advocate a last-minute appeal. The prisoner sat all but oblivious to it in his death-watch cell, resolved to die by the loudest, bloodiest method an American court will sanction.

Six marksmen, each being paid \$200 (£198) to shoot a man at 25ft, gathered yesterday at the Utah state prison in Bluffdale to await their role in the grimly theatrical business of execution by firing squad. Shortly before midnight (7am GMT) they were to take up position behind horizontal slots in a storage hanger in the maximum security wing. An alternate would stand by in case one dropped out. Of the remaining five, four were given live rounds and the fifth a

blank so that none could be sure of firing a fatal bullet. Ballistics experts said the blank had been made to give a normal recoil. Their target, harshly lit by five floodlights, was described by witnesses of Utah's last firing-squad execution as a "throne of death". Nineteen years ago Gary Gilmore was shot dead in the same bleak warehouse but strapped to a second-hand wooden chair. Taylor's chair was purpose-built in the prison workshop. Backed by 4in of pine and a mound of sandbags under black plastic sheeting, it was mounted on a sloping metal pan designed to collect the prisoner's blood. Side-flaps were added to minimise the spraying of blood and tissue. "He maintains his innocence but doesn't want to go on living on death row," Jack Ford, the prison spokesman, told an international throng of reporters. A representative of

the state attorney-general's office would be on hand in case Taylor requested an appeal even as he walked his final 30ft, Mr Ford said. Sedation had been refused. Taylor's claim of innocence has been met with scorn by the parents of Charla King, the 11-year-old girl who was found raped, sodomised and strangled with a telephone wire in her home north of Salt Lake City seven years ago. Taylor's fingerprints were found on the telephone beside her body. Charla's mother, Sherron, was due to attend the execution at 12.02. She attacked the notion that it was barbaric. "Tell me what's barbaric," she said. "My daughter was alive when he raped her. He won't even hear the bullets."

Indeed, Taylor will probably be dead before the sound of the rifle cracks catches up with the four 30-calibre rounds aimed at a white circle pinned over his heart. He was due to be led in shackles from the death-watch cell to the execution chamber ten minutes before what Mr Ford insisted on calling "the midnight hour". Strapped down with Velcro, he would be invited by the prison warden to say his last words to the 18 witnesses behind one-way mirrors. After a paramedic had located his heart, Taylor was to be left alone, shielded only by a black hood. Death penalty opponents held a thinly attended rally in driving snow in Salt Lake City on Wednesday night. They were due to meet Utah's Governor, Michael Leavitt, yesterday but held out little hope of intervention. Taylor, 36, spent the day with an uncle, Gordon Lee, his only known relative, and a lawyer who has become his spiritual adviser, Christine Rogers was behind his conversion to Catholicism. The countdown to his death has been grim. For 30 days, preparations have been conducted with the precision of a space launch. Even his last smoke was choreographed to take place on his walk through the snow. Smoking is banned in Utah's public buildings.



Pilot Baba emerges yesterday after four days in a hole. Rationalist critics who watched wore bullet-proof vests because of alleged death threats

Hindu holy man's underground feat strikes gold

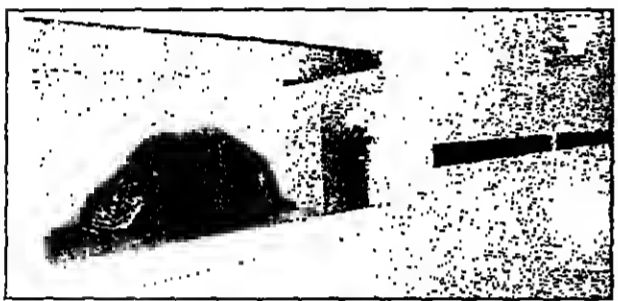
FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN ROHINI, INDIA

PILOT BABA, a renowned Hindu holy man, crawled unaided out of the ground yesterday, four days after being "buried alive" in one of the most ancient feats of Indian mysticism. He took a deep breath of crisp winter air, supposedly his first in 96 hours, and acknowledged the cheers and substantial financial offerings of 10,000 devotees. The art of not breathing, *bhramadhhi*, can be performed in water or earth: the Baba has appeared to demonstrate both over the years. Close

up, however, his magic is rather less impressive. He was buried not in earth, but entombed in a hole 9ft deep and 9ft wide, with a *charpoy* (string bed) and blanket. The hole was covered with wooden poles, topped with corrugated-iron sheeting, a plastic cover and a couple of inches of soil, giving the impression he was buried. Members of the Indian Rationalist Association, which debunks religious myths, watched with evident amusement as the crowd became frenzied to the chanting of long-haired *sadhus* (saints) dressed in saffron robes. The Baba, surrounded by priests, climbed on to a dais where he addressed the

multitude, telling them that his demonstration of spiritual and mental power was for the good of people the world over. He shared the dais with many boxes of apples, which he said he would imbue with some of his powers and distribute to the people. The moody rolled in; the Baba said he had remained under water for six days in 1992 and had sat in an airtight glass canister for two weeks. "I go into a trance. I appear to be dead," he said. Sanal Edamaruku, the secretary-general of the Indian Rationalist Association, and several supporters wore bullet-proof vests beneath their shirts. He said he had received death

threats for trying to discredit the holy man. The Baba performed his feat in a public park in the small town of Rohini, on the edge of Delhi. Mr Edamaruku said the aim was to rally public support to take over the park for construction of a temple. "All of this is to do with land-grabbing. Once he gains popular support, he can gain access to political power and eventually take the land." He said all miracles performed by holy men were tricks. Appearing to be dead and stopping the pulse was a favourite. "All you do is squeeze a ball in your armpit and the pulse in your wrist will practically disappear."



A view of the execution chair, and the openings through which the chosen marksmen will fire

1979 killer hanged

Smyrna, Delaware: In the first hanging here in 50 years, Billy Bailey, a double murderer, was executed yesterday for killing Gilbert and Clara Lambertson, an elderly farmer and his wife, in 1979. He became the third murderer hanged in America since the death penalty was reinstated by the Supreme Court in 1976. Bailey, 49, opted for hanging instead of lethal injection. His lawyer, Edmund Lyons, said he "found the process medieval and barbaric".

He asked: "If we are proud of what we've done today... why [do] we do it at night?" About 100 anti-death penalty protesters held a vigil. Sexton Lambertson, 68, one of the victims' two sons who witnessed the execution, said his parents "were very innocent people... they were old and small and he was a big brute. He chose to shoot them so he chose to die". For his last meal Bailey chose steak, baked potatoes, rolls, butter, peas and vanilla ice cream. (Reuter)

North Korea famine makes troops 'hope for war'

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE THREAT of famine in North Korea is so great that soldiers, convinced they will soon die, hope a war will break out so they may be killed in battle instead, according to defectors. The escapers also claim prison officials are strangling prisoners' new-born babies.

"If the current situation continues for several months, there will be a riot or a catastrophe [in North Korea]," said Staff Sergeant Choe Kwang Hyok, 25, a soldier who defected to South Korea last month. "North Korean soldiers hope war will break out," he told a Seoul news conference. Lee Soon Ok, who also

defected last month with her son, 29, told the same news conference she saw some starving prisoners eating mud. She added: "When women prisoners gave birth to babies, prison officials strangled them to death in front of the mothers." The remarks came as America, South Korea and Japan began a series of high-level

diplomatic meetings in Hawaii on North Korea. America indicated this week it was prepared to extend food aid, with Japan and South Korea, to the North, where 130,000 people reportedly face starvation. But South Korea reiterated yesterday that it would not provide aid unless Pyongyang dropped its hostile attitude to Seoul. The South Korean

Prime Minister, Lee Soo Sung, said the North should first seek rapprochement. Staff Sergeant Choe said he had gained 15kg (33lb) since defecating five weeks ago. His unit's staple food rations, mostly mixed corn and beans, were reduced from 800 to 650 grams (28oz to 23oz) a meal in September. Meat was handed out only 15 to 20 times a year.

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Chinese President stages dress rehearsal for a retreat from reforms after party warnings

Jiang acts to shut the door against 'pollution' by West

JIANG ZEMIN, the President of China, is tightening his personal power and moving his country away from reform — and he is wearing the clothes to prove it.

During the past week Mr Jiang has made his intentions plain in tough speeches on the economy and the media and by appointing military commissars in senior ranks in the People's Liberation Army.

Since he became party General Secretary, President, and chairman of the Central Military Commission, China's equivalent of army commander-in-chief — offices he has accumulated since 1989, thus rivaling Chairman Mao — Mr Jiang has almost always worn a Western lounge suit to show his adherence to the policy of opening China's door to the West.

But dress is a significant political indicator in China and on Wednesday, when he called for economic reforms to be slowed down to counter Western threats, Mr Jiang wore the traditional buttoned-up tunic, sometimes called a Mao suit. On Tuesday, when he promoted four senior military men to full generals, the President, who has never served in the forces, appeared in a military outfit minus insignia.

Part of what he is doing is continuing his erosion of the family of Deng Xiaoping, the 91-year-old senior leader, some of whose closest allies, including Peking's party boss, President Jiang picked off last year on corruption charges and whose economic policies he savaged on Wednesday.

Mr Deng used to justify the potential dangers of economic reform by admitting that "when you open the door sometimes flies and other insects come in". He meant that to some extent China



Peking's leader has switched to a politically correct wardrobe for old-style policies, writes Jonathan Mirsky

would take the risk of foreign ideas causing a degree of "spiritual pollution". In 1985 Chen Yun, a leading conservative, said that Mr Deng's reforms were leading to corruption and crime and threatening party stability.

This week Mr Jiang, who in 1989 after the Tiananmen Square massacre had been declared by Mr Deng to be his heir and the "core leader", echoed the Chen warnings. "We must ban the cultural trash poisoning the people and the social atmosphere," he said, adding: "We cannot sacrifice culture and ideology merely for a short period of economic development."

Mr Jiang was repeating the old party fears of Western-style ideas, which has been borne out in recent weeks by the cancelling of research projects in the Academy of Social Sciences deemed to be too liberal.

The media, always a party worry, have been warned recently that they must obtain economic news filtered through the official news agency and to avoid subjects which "slander China". Three days ago Mr Jiang, while visiting the army's own paper, *People's Liberation Army Daily*, said bluntly, quoting Mao: "To do news work successfully it is imperative that statesmen run newspapers." Journalism, he said, "always reflects directly or indirectly the party's and the Government's political standards, positions and viewpoints". Papers were told to "resist the invasion of corrupt capitalist thinking".

Cutting cloth to suit pattern of the time

By Jonathan Mirsky

DRESS, always important in Chinese traditional times for displaying rank and status, has signified political correctness in modern times.

China's first President, Sun Yat-sen, wore a Russian-style close-fitting tunic as a sign of modern, military austerity. This was the origin of the Mao jacket. His successor, Chiang Kai-shek, alternated between Western-style military dress and mandarin robes, designed to show off his bogus veneration for the Confucian tradition.

Mao wore a variation on the Sun Yat-sen outfit, as shabby as possible, a reflection of the Chairman's carelessness about personal attire: his top colleagues wore immaculate versions of the same outfit. In the Maoist period it would have been literal sui-

cide to wear anything else. After Mao's death in 1976, senior officials began venturing into the presence of foreigners in Western lounge suits, and in 1987 when Zhao Ziyang, the Prime Minister, became party General Secretary he emerged with his most senior Politburo colleagues before the Western press, all wearing smart suits.

Zhao made them open their jackets to display the Shanghai labels — always a sign of the best in China — evidence, he said, that reform had now touched the personal habits of the leaders. But the founder of reform, Deng Xiaoping, kept to the tunic.

Canny intellectuals are said to keep battered old clothes under their beds in case the proletarian look ever roars back into fashion.

Destruction date is set for the final stocks of smallpox

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

STOCKS of the smallpox virus should be destroyed by the end of June 1999, the executive board of the World Health Organisation has decreed.

That decision must be ratified by the organisation's 190 member states at the World Health Assembly next May. The delay until 1999 is designed, it says, to "give time to reach a broader consensus".

Just two stocks of smallpox virus remain, at the Centres for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Russian State Research Centre for Virology and Biotechnology in Koltsovo, Novosibirsk. A scourge of mankind for more than 3,500 years, smallpox was eliminated from the wild by a 1980 vaccination campaign.

Destruction of the last remaining laboratory stocks has been opposed on principle, and on scientific grounds. Some scientists simply oppose destroying any form of life, even a virus estimated to have killed 600,000 people a year in Europe between the 16th and 18th centuries. "To wipe out a species is always a concern," says Dr Brian Mahy of CDC.

Some scientists who work on viruses oppose destruction

because there may still be things to learn by studying smallpox. The WHO says scientists have now produced harmless clones of the virus and have its full genetic blueprint, which should provide them with all they need.

The virus will be destroyed by autoclave — an oven that will heat it to a fatally high temperature. The virus will be taken from its locked freezer at a maximum security building by researchers in pressurised spacesuits and heated to 130C for 40 minutes. Then the process will be repeated.

But the WHO's setting of the destruction date so far ahead leaves plenty of time for last-minute pleas. In a communiqué, the organisation said the disease's eradication was "among the greatest public health achievements of all time". The last known case of smallpox, which disfigures and causes blindness and even death, was recorded in Somalia in 1977.

The destruction of smallpox in the wild means that mankind is progressively losing any natural resistance to it. In theory at least, that means an escape could set off a major epidemic.



Change of mood: President Jiang, the moderniser in Western suit and tie, is transformed into traditional hardliner in a Mao suit

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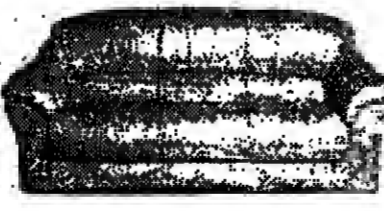
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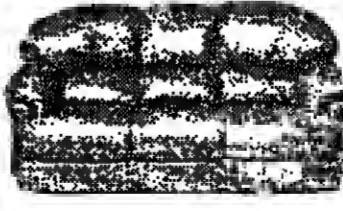
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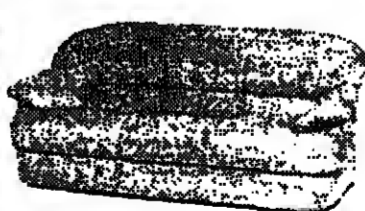
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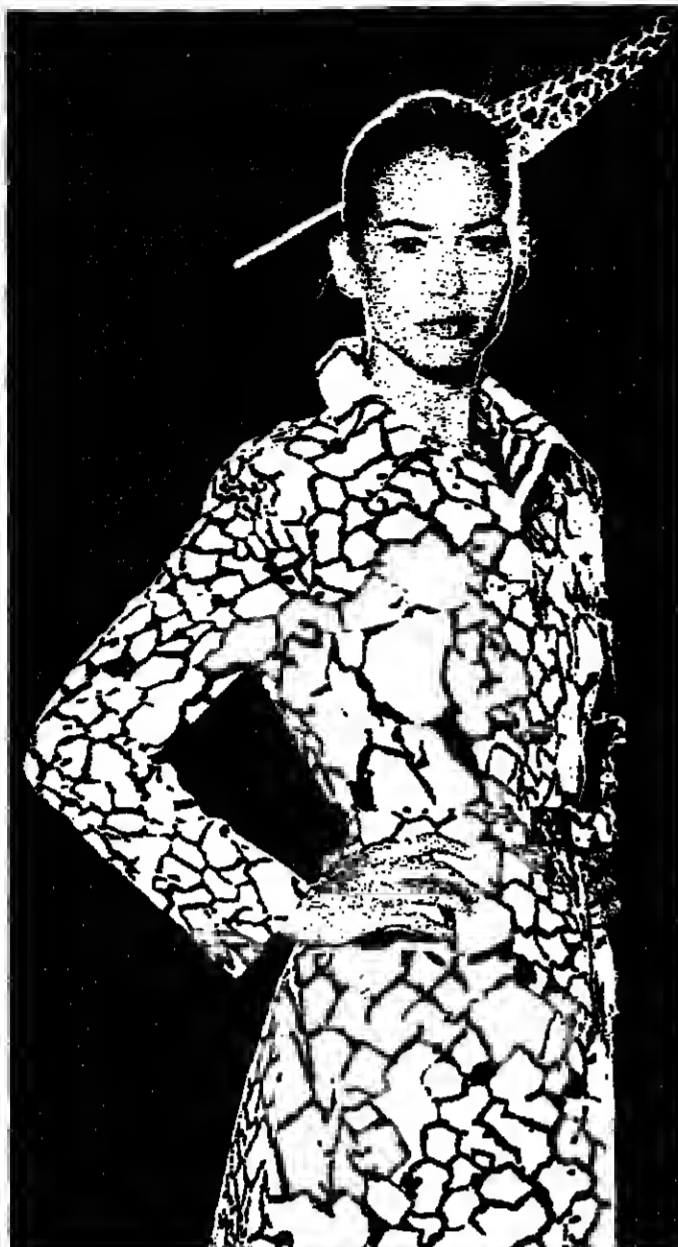
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How to show you're a lady



Feathers and flowers: GIANNI VERSACE's models wore a single feather in their hair (left), while YVES SAINT LAURENT modelled blooms (right)



Featherweight fabrics: VALENTINO's patchworked lace (left), GIVENCHY's galleon dresses (centre) and DIOR's floral tribute (right)



Feather cut: CHANEL's slender silhouette was all about the fit. Photographs by CHRIS MOORE

PARIS

Designers dazzle with divine haute couture

Edith Head, the most celebrated of Hollywood's costume designers, who dressed everyone from Marlene Dietrich to Mae West, once said: "You never forget the dress or suit in which you looked well, felt right, and lived wonderful moments."

At the haute couture collections shown in Paris this week there were some truly wonderful moments and some truly fabulous, unforgettable clothes.

Haute couture has much in common with Edith Head. It deals in fantasy. It produces clothes (very expensive clothes) designed specifically so a woman might play a role, be it on the big screen, on her big day (bridal gowns count for much of the couturier's custom), at a quiet society luncheon or a flash awards ceremony. Haute couture is the ultimate luxury — a dressmaker to the stars.

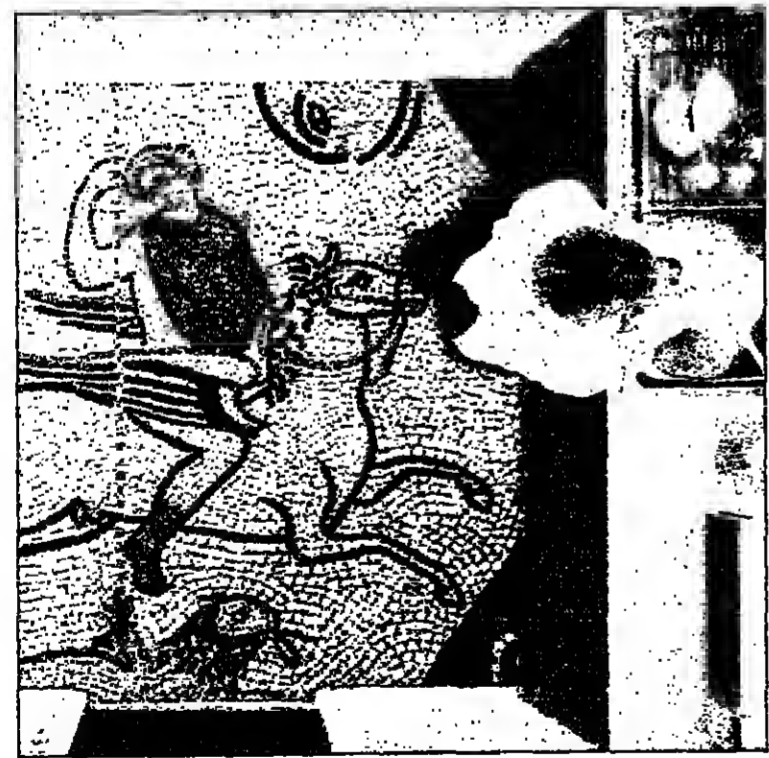
It is not difficult to see why screen stars such as Melanie Griffiths and Sharon Stone head for the door of John Galiano. His debut collection for Givenchy began with familiar larger-than-life ballgowns, but it was the quieter moments which revealed his true potential: an ivory button-through day dress with a cheetah belt, or the single-button stone wool trouser suit, as simple as it sounds. Only, like everything else, tailored to perfection.

By far the most popular motifs of the season were flowers and feathers: Dior's floral tributes disguised as evening dresses and Ungaro's fluffball, powderpuff trim.

Yves Saint Laurent's 1940s-inspired collection fluttered down the catwalk. Best was a bohem of giant rose petals worn over a sliver of black satin and chantilly lace with straps as fine as a single strand of sewing thread. Divine.

There were moments of divine inspiration on the catwalk of Valentino — featherweight patchworked lace dresses, long poloneck dresses with only a narrow hipster belt as decoration, and understated space cadet day wear — but mostly his silhouettes appeared a little too mumsy.

Gianni Versace miraculously sewed leather and lace



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Fashion journalist of the year



IAIN R. WEBB

together and made it flow effortlessly around the body, exposing goodly amounts of flesh. His daywear was more demure, but cut in flashy, often clashing, optical patterns and animal prints, it had plenty of rock 'n' roll attitude.

Black lace dresses by Oscar de la Renta for Balmain cast a mere shadow across his models. So superfine, they looked little more than a trace of where a real dress might be.

Christian Lacroix blitzed Paris with blistering colourways — chartreuse, Parma violet, marshmallow pink and tangerine. He puffed satin into wonderful voluminous skirts, while his corsets literally dripped with jewels.

There were few moments this week as unforgettable as the Chanel show at the Ritz. The collection designed by Karl Lagerfeld offered a slender silhouette. Skirts either skimmed the knee or fell to the floor. Jackets held the body's line, accentuating the shoulders, slipping out at the hip. Everything fitted like a glove.

Edith Head once suggested her epitaph: "A dress should be tight enough to show you're a woman and loose enough to prove you're a lady." Lagerfeld's latest designs certainly fit the bill.

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Ten years after *The Times* began its new life in Wapping, Peter Stothard recalls the days of revolution

MATTHEW COOK

And then it was up to us

I'll pick you up in ten minutes," said the Editor. "We're going for a drive." Charles Wilson always moved quickly about *The Times*, but on this occasion his speed was astonishing. I looked back into his office to ask a question. He had disappeared.

Fifteen minutes later I was still waiting for him outside our glass-and-marble entrance hall. I looked for Joe, his driver. Nothing. Finally the Editor's car came up from behind. Charlie himself was at the wheel, adjusting himself to what looked like unfamiliar controls. "Get in," he gestured. I had to struggle with the locked passenger door. "Where you are going now," he barked, "you are going to want to talk about." Pause. "But you can only talk about it with the people you are going to see there. That is absolutely important." He thrust his finger to amplify his point: the car swerved as though to agree with him.

Until that moment, unlike the small group that had planned the move of News International Newspapers to Wapping ten years ago today, I was almost unaware of what was about to happen to us all. In December 1985, my job was writing political leaders. My mind was on the Westland affair, in which leaks and betrayals were nearly destroying the Thatcher Government.

Charlie's mind was elsewhere. During the journey I heard a serious lecture on the dangers of leaks, betrayals, divisions and broken promises — at the senior levels of newspapers. After 20 minutes, he turned the car towards some iron gates and the intense attention of two guards. We then swept up a curving concrete ramp and into a dark shed.

I quickly realised that I had failed the first test. I would like to be able to claim now that I saw instantly the benefits of a new printing plant, with new work practices and a reliable means of producing and distributing our work. But, dazed perhaps by the secrecy and drama, I did not

Charlie left the car diagonally across the shed floor. "Look at this," he said. "Wider than Fleet Street." Half-an-hour later, up above in the publishing room, the truth began to tell. Sets of blue-and-yellow belts were circling around iron frames like a Meccano monster in Hamley's window. Real newspapers were on the move. The printing machinery was loaded with newsprint, as though ready to produce proper copies of *The Times*. The place was "manned as though ready to go" and yet it was almost deserted.

It is customary now for writers to compare the dirty, dangerous and union-dominated plants of Gray's Inn Road with the clean efficiency of Wapping. I have read so much about the old press halls, where Mickey Mouse played at Spanish practices with Sogat, Natsopa and the NGA, that I almost believe I experienced them for myself.

In fact, and in common with many writers on *The Times* ten years ago, I had barely been on the site of Britain's notorious industrial battlefields. On the one occasion when I dared a visit to the machine-room floors, I was greeted by grown men pretending to be monkeys in a zoo. I did not go back.

Many managers I discovered, had rarely entered the alien territory which they were vainly charged to control.

"Here," said Charlie, "it is all going to change. We don't know how. But there's an Armageddon about to happen. And we have got to be ready for it." He pointed out a long, low brick building just a few yards away. Today the office of *The Times* seems a perfectly plausible place for a newspaper to be, but on that day a decade ago it did not. It looked to me like a long broken brick pillar, part of some giant dockworks which had known better days. "And here we are," he said.

The new entrance to *The Times* building was by an unusually wide door flanked by handrails. The floor rose gradually without a step. We walked in. This was to have

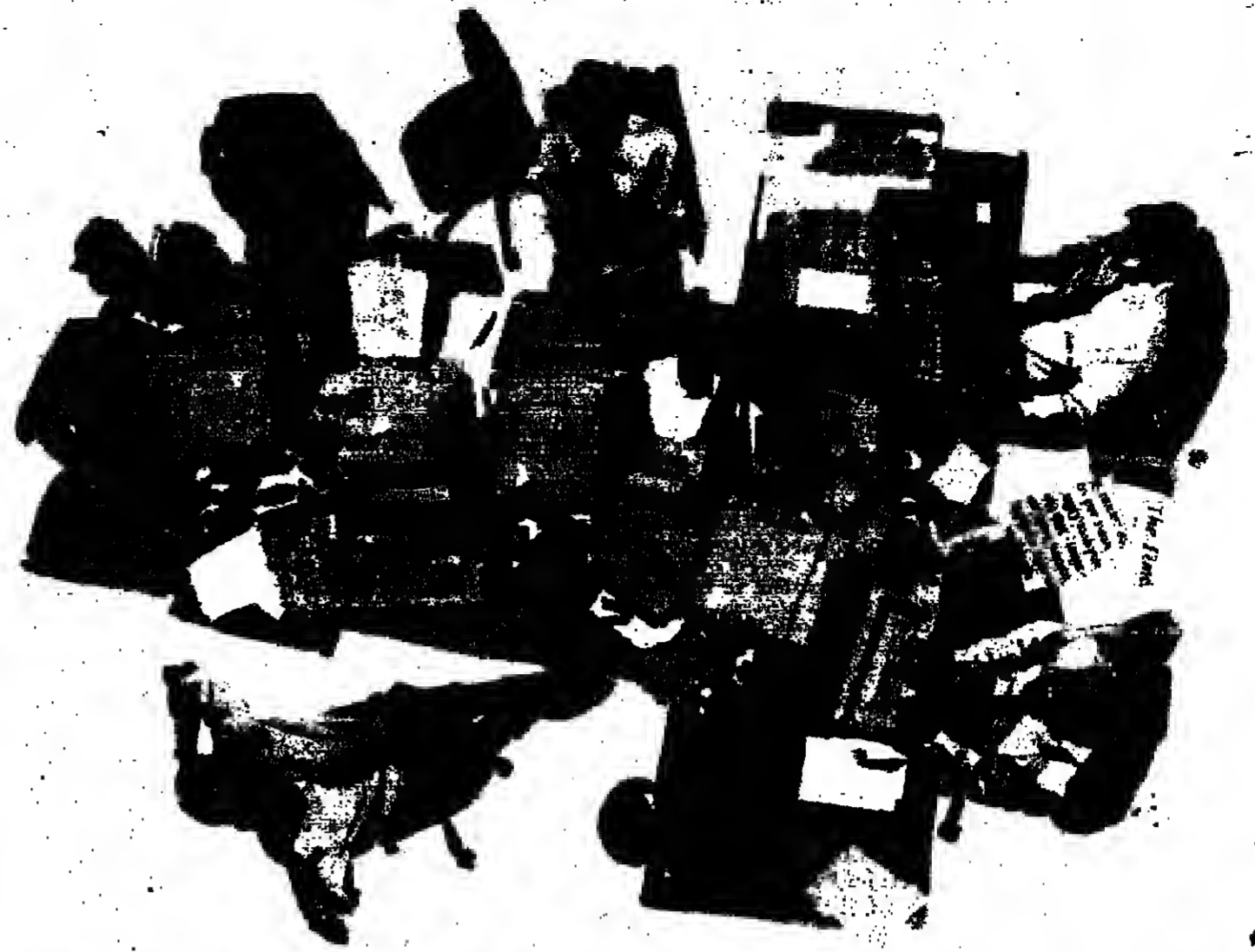
been the Editor's office for Charlie One, as we knew him, Charles Douglas-Home, whose cancer had kept him in a wheelchair before his death the previous month. He never used his custom-built door-way. For Charlie Two, editorship and Armageddon were to come in quick succession.

Inside were our desks, our computers and a fresh carpentry smell. Everyone had a space reserved. All the journalists who wanted to come to the new world of newspapers would be able to take their places. By now it was clear what was going to happen. We stayed only a few minutes and left quietly, discussing Westland — a safer topic.

I still have the somewhat portentous note that I wrote for a friend abroad that night and never posted: "The trip back to Gray's Inn Road this afternoon was almost supernatural. Everyone in our old office has a place marked for them elsewhere, a place which they sometimes speak of in hushed tones but truly know nothing of, a place which they can enter if they make the right decision and will be barred from it if they make the wrong one: it is like a heaven — although some will certainly call it a hell."

By January 24, 1986, we were almost trained in the new technology. Inside the offices of a musical impresario close to Claridge's, a team of formidable Australian women had the job of tutoring journalists. It was a tough task. I had never before learnt even to touch-type (for years I had detested leaders to my secretary, Val Smith, pacing round the desk for what I thought was rhetorical impact), and I was not alone. One of our finest "production journalists" found it hard even to operate the teach-yourself cassette tape, let alone the Atex computers. Out in the street, after my first visit, I met Eric Jacobs, one of the shrewdest observers of newspaper politics, on his way to the Savile Club. I was sure we had been rubbed. But no. The secret remained safe for all the weeks that were necessary.

In the marble entrance hall where two months earlier I had waited for Charlie's car, several of us, including Rupert Murdoch, the Editor and I, were waiting to greet the Israeli Prime Minister, Shimon Peres. We knew that elsewhere in the building, negotiations with the print unions were proceeding to-



wards a bigger than usual stone wall. Israeli security guards mingled with angry printworkers. Someone behind me said that it was the hosts, not the guests, who that day ran the greater risk of attack. We managed nervous smiles.

Later that afternoon the decision came down that the stone wall had, indeed, been reached. The unions were not to blackmail us again: we were on the move to a place which the unions were confident could never work without them. There was to be no edition of *The Times* that night — but, if we kept our nerve, only that night.

I do not recall exactly how the news arrived among the leader-writers. I noticed first that the picture of Charles Douglas-Home on the corridor wall had been taken. I thought it had been vandalised until I saw Liz Seeber, the Editor's personal assistant, lovingly brandishing her screwdriver so that Charlie One, William Rees-Mogg and the rest of our Editors-gone-by should go with Charlie Two to Wapping.

The oil painting of Henri de Blowitz, our 19th-century Paris correspondent, was soon on its way to Wapping in the boot of our night editor's Sierra. Benjamin Robert

Haydon's great painting *Waiting for the Times*, which traditionally hangs behind the Editor's office chair, received gentle treatment on the back seat of Charlie's Jaguar.

I felt relief that the waiting was over. But like writers everywhere, I was unreasonably irritated by the loss of my latest words — a leader about the Westland affair, which Val had just finished turning into "copy", and which was now surplus to requirements. Inside our corner office there was nothing much to save except a dozen bottles of South African wine, which the chief sub had just delivered at favourable wholesale prices, and some champagne which Bernard Levin had given me for Christmas. So my departure past an incipient picket line was more clanking than the occasion properly merited.

We did, indeed, miss only that one Saturday issue. The bound volume of *The Times* for 1986, which sits on the Editor's desk as I write these words, contains a lone *Daily Telegraph* to fill the space on that day, January 25: warning enough of what might have happened had the move not been so well prepared. By Sunday

we were at work in Wapping. The shed, "wider than Fleet Street", was full of trucks.

Not all our journalists had claimed their places in the new life: but there were enough of us. Gradually, over the following days and weeks, most of the desks filled. There eventually came the true exhilaration of being free from union censorship and control, free to produce as many newspapers as our readers would buy, free to print in colour, free to begin again the creative business of making and selling *The Times*.

There were bad days among the good. I had not personally hated the trade union officials before: I had hardly seen them, and if some of their members wanted to make me feel like a zoo visitor, that was their choice. But I did hate the union pickets outside Wapping who stuck dozens of corrosive sticky labels on Val Smith's new car. I did hate the pickets for selecting their targets from among the physically smallest, weakest and most vulnerable. I still remember the politicians who supported trade union violence that they knew was wrong but did not dare to condemn.

Today is the tenth anniversary of

our first full day at Wapping. My strongest memories, however, are not of that first day here but of the days before the Armageddon, of Charles Wilson's discipline, of Rupert Murdoch's certainty, of the journalists on *The Times* who on one Friday night determined that our best traditions, our best values, even our best oil paintings, would live and move on.

We have no first edition copy left of the issue dated January 27. The main story all night was Westland — but the earliest copies, I remember, also had on the front page news of a will, for some £300,000, left by a gentleman from Shoreham-by-Sea. This did not signal a new editorial policy: the only alternative to the will was a white space where a News-in-Brief should have been.

There was a leader on Westland too, not dissimilar to the one I had dictated two days before. But at every full stop in the first edition, there was also the start of a new paragraph. At first I blamed my Australian keyboard tutors for this unwanted staccato in my style. But from that first day in Wapping, every typographical mistake was ours.

The author is Editor of *The Times*.

I have just realised that it is an appallingly long time since I had the pleasure of annoying the lawyers: please allow me to catch up now. (I have more than once drawn attention to the fact that although I am known as the Lawyer's Bane, I have an astonishing large number of dear friends from the world of law.) So if the wind is in the west, you will shortly hear the familiar cries of "Oh, it's Levin again, why doesn't somebody hit him over the head with a copy of *Chitty on Contract*? That would shut him up for a bit."

Yes, but only a bit.

And the first thing I must draw to the nation's eye is the lawyers' almost incredible belief that the nation doesn't notice what the lawyers are doing. It is not a matter of hiding behind the gowns and wigs or trying to bamboozle the customers with arcane languages: the lawyers themselves are the first to climb onto the rooftops and declare their very worst wickednesses.

Here is our infallible legal correspondent, Frances Gibb, on the subject:

Plans for barristers' clients to be able to claim compensation for shoddy work have been diluted to gain the profession's backing... Leaders of the Bar have redrawn the scheme for a complaints system to make it far harder to lodge a barrister... consumer bodies have criticised the amendments, arguing that even in its original form the scheme offered inadequate remedies for shoddy service from barristers... At present the Bar will consider only the most serious complaints amounting to professional misconduct, and no compensation is payable. But after the revised scheme... people can claim

compensation only if they can prove they have suffered actual monetary loss... the test of "inadequate professional service" has been tightened, so that complaints will be limited to conduct which falls "significantly short of that which is to be reasonably expected of a barrister in all the circumstances... the scheme is also far more restrictive than that originally proposed by a committee under Lord Alexander... a former Bar chairman... People would have been able to complain about work in court, as well as out of it... But the Bar has refused to accept that recommendation. Its proposed scheme says the immunity should apply even to lesser complaints of shoddy work...

You must admit that this is the most monumental *chutzpah* even the lawyers have ever cooked up. It states unashamedly that if you are obviously and clearly wronged by an ignorant, lazy, incompetent, drunken or stupid lawyer, and you seek compensation, you can whistle for it, and I wouldn't be surprised if the Bar's next charmer will be to take those who are due for compensation and have them thrown into jail, insisting that any claim against any lawyer is *ipso facto* criminal.

But you haven't heard the best of it, and I have, so I must share it with you. The former chairman of the Bar, Peter Goldsmith, QC, obviously cannot say

plainly and in human language that a large number of his fellow lawyers are a bunch of greedy scoundrels, but he must wake up and erect a guillotine — a sharp guillotine.

Hear him trying to sit on both ends of the see-saw: "The... concerns of the profession have been taken on board to produce a scheme that balances the interests of the public with those of the barrister." (And presumably *vice versa*.)

But the really funny bit in Mr Goldsmith's see-sawing is when he... gave warning that... without any kind of scheme, the Bar risked being regulated by a quango."

Isn't it wonderful? Can't you see it? The hordes of barristers immediately called from whatever work they were doing (ruining someone, I wouldn't wonder) — hundreds from the House of Commons alone — the gigantic swarms from the Civil Service, the huge billboards (no expense spared), announcing that the nation will collapse instantly if even one hair on one head of one lawyer is ever disturbed, the older lawyers dropping

word or two with the horror of it, the — well, you get the idea, which is that there is nothing whatever, not even a couple of dozen atomic bombs, that would or could be allowed to lose an argument between the Bar, the very Bar, and a mere Parliament.

But I have a surprise for you. When the infamous name of Levin is heard in the land, many a wig-and-gown years for a world in which murder is not a crime: but I have to remind you that when I use the word lawyer, I could be using it in two very clearly separate senses, and having had a word or two with the Bar, I turn now to the solicitors. Now is that switch just a dip in the bran-tub for the solicitors have been pulled up for a very good reason. The reason is that *Which?* — the splendid, ironclad, glorious monthly magazine which tells us which sauceman to buy, and which motorcar not to buy (to the fury of the lesser sauceman-makers and the lesser motor-car makers) — is on the march.

Doubled up with laughter, I knew what was coming. Just as all the barristers

go purple in the face and start screaming if anybody says they are not perfect, so it was exactly with the solicitors. Try a headline or two: for instance, "Consumer group accuses lawyers of shoddy service", and far worse. "How clients were told to take the 'wrong' action". For when *Which?* is on the warpath, it goes incognito; if *Which?* wants to try hairpins or elephants, the answer comes only when the work has been done. So, of course, the lawyers — be they barristers or solicitors — are screaming "We wuz robbed".

Even that very jolly fellow Martin Mears abandoned his jollity and joined the whiners, and fell over his feet with joy when he claimed he had found a mistake among the *Which?* finger-pointers. (He wants the evidence to be produced before the denouement, but *Which?* never allows that, quite rightly.)

Anyway the evidence is appalling. I haven't got the space for what Mrs S went through, but she had to fight for the compensation — she was offered £2,500 and in the end her solicitors had to pay out £12,500. The truth is that, as the Editor of *Which?* says, "Solicitors owe a duty to their clients to give the best advice. Too often, advice is shoddy and consumers can lose out, wasting time and money

and even going to court unnecessarily". That's nothing in one test, only one firm out of 40 got it right. When everything has been put together, and all the excuses have run out, this is a giant scandal. After all, we are not trying to find which is the best toaster, they are trying to find lawyers who can do their job properly, and they have found a huge number who cannot. And the squealing and whining only makes the scandal even worse.

But it was brave of *Which?* to cover this story and to stick it out. When the worst toaster is pointed out, and we tell ourselves that without *Which?* we would never have known, there are no screams — the maker of the bad toaster is sufficiently chastened to tip-toe out and go home. But the bad solicitor hasn't caught on. He does not tip-toe out — he stays there, screaming that he is innocent and so are all other solicitors.

Now, we all know, or we should, what squealing and demanding apologies means: it means that the squealers and shouters and demanders are, every one of them, guilty of what the squealers and shouters deny.

Let us go back to the barristers. They do not scream and shout, but perhaps that is because they are hardened by time not to worry when scoundrels like me point the bone at them. If I am right, all the solicitors have to do is to shut up and stop squealing. Meanwhile, *Which?* has got a huge slice of notoriety: it should capitalise on this, though it is true that the offices of *Which?* will feel rather scalded after this heady stuff. Never mind; what about setting *Which?* on Members of Parliament? Alas, where will you find a "best buy"?

Barristers and solicitors are as bad as each other — just try complaining about them

Inequality before the law

Bernard Levin

Powell axed

ONE OF Britain's foremost ambassadors has fired a broadside at Sir Charles Powell, the former private secretary to Baroness Thatcher. The salvo comes in the letters pages of this week's *Spectator* from Sir John Weston, Britain's Ambassador to the United Nations in New York.

He accuses Sir Charles of having ideas above his station concerning his relationship with the late François Mitterrand. After Mitterrand died, Sir Charles wrote proudly that he "must have spent more time in his company than any other Englishman".

Weston quibbles. "Since the Oxford Dictionary defines 'company' as 'a gathering of people for social intercourse', perhaps it was more a matter of Charles being in the 'presence' of the President. Assuming of course it wasn't the other way round!"

Powell was unreachable in Indonesia yesterday, but one of his supporters dismissed the letter as

typical carping from the Foreign Office. "Charles has always been regarded as a rum one — ever since he nailed his colours so firmly to Mrs T's mast," he said. "It's just the sour grapes you'd expect."

"My Dad is completely lost for words"

● Coincidence-backers were in their element at Lingfield Park yesterday, where all six races were named after former Prime Ministers. The opening event, the Thatcher Limited Stakes, was won by Carrolls Marc, a well supported 7-2 second favourite.

In a spin

THE SWEDISH navy is embarrassed. High ranking naval types have admitted that what they thought was the recorded sound of sinister Soviet propellers was in fact the furious paddling of the little furry legs of the mink.

A scientific commission set up by the Government concludes that most of the invading submarines reported by the navy were mythical. According to an article in the latest issue of *New Scientist*, on 40 occasions between 1992 and 1994, a network of microphones detected the sound of bubbles caused by a rotational movement in the water. The navy estimated the speed at up to 200 rpm, and assumed it must be submarine propellers.

But according to the secretary of



the commission, Ingvar Akesson, tests with swimming minks can produce the same readings as propellers. "It is very puzzling but they do," he says admiringly.

● The whisper in Whitehall is that the less-than-entirely-awaited Scott report is to be published on February 14. Not the Valentine's Day missive John Major might have hoped for.

House rules

HARRIET HARMAN's choice of St Olave's is a fine one if she wants her son to master the cut and thrust

of debate. The new president of the Cambridge Union, Nick Chattath, is an old boy, and founded the school debating society.

"I remember one interesting debate," he says naughtily. "We debated the motion, 'This House has become the kind of people its parents warned it against.' Very apt."

● Michael Foot's residence at No 10 is to be commemorated, even though he never made it to Downing Street. Blaenau Gwent Borough Council is to erect a plaque at the tiny miner's cottage at 10 Morgan Street, Tredegar in Ebbw Vale, the slice of South Wales where Foot was MP for 33 years and wrote most of his acclaimed biography of Aneurin Bevan.

Long walk

GILLIAN CLARKE, the snow-haired wife of the Chancellor who took her degree at Newnham in medieval history before pursuing postgraduate studies, hosted a party at 11 Downing Street last night to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Cam-



The first Newnham ladies

bridge college. The alumni present included Germaine Greer, who now teaches at the college, the fragrant Mary Archer and the actress Eleanor Bron. Newnham, which claims to have

the longest corridor in Europe, was once the haunt of Prince Edward, who used to visit his old girlfriend, Eleanor Weightman, in her room when he was a student at Jesus between 1983 and 1986. "He used to call her 'Munchkin'," recalled one Newnhamite at the party.

Late start

IRISH ears were smiling recently in Dublin, after a concert by the Oslo Philharmonic, which got off to an unpropitious start. The orchestra arrived safely, but the tory with the instruments and clothes did not. So while the city was searched for instruments to borrow, the audience at the National Concert Hall was entertained by traditional Norwegian ditties and jazz on the piano.

The programme finally began at 10.30pm, when the players trooped on in jeans, T-shirts and sneakers. But pizzazz made up for the delay, in both quality and quantity: it didn't finish until 1.30 in the morning.

P.H.S

سكنا من اللصل

ANGLO-IRISH ANGST

Dublin should become a persuader for democracy

Progress in Ulster has been steady and certain when the British and Irish Governments have been travelling in tandem. Solidarity between London and Dublin, and most importantly, agreement across the House of Commons, have helped the parties in Northern Ireland a little closer to peace. The strains evident in the Anglo-Irish axis since the publication of the Mitchell report on de-commissioning do not augur well for the days ahead.

Whitehall is anxious to play down talk of a rift but Dick Spring, the Irish Foreign Minister, has hardly expressed himself with the measured restraint appropriate to a mild diplomatic disagreement. John Major argued in the House of Commons that he would not see how elections could be regarded as "a block to progress". Mr Spring said elections were, "a cul-de-sac". It is difficult to discern the common ground there. To be sure, the Irish Prime Minister, John Bruton, has been less blunt. In a speech yesterday to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg he simply downgraded Mr Major's imaginative support for an elected body as, "no more than an idea". It is an idea whose time has come and one which deserves better than this wintry dismissal from Dublin.

An elected body, far from being a cul-de-sac, detour, or even road back to Stormont, is the most creative proposal yet advanced for moving the peace process forward. No guns would have to be given up before the talking could begin; every party would have shown its commitment to democracy by using the ballot box, not the bullet, to test its true strength.

Dublin's coolness seems to be born not of principled objection to an elected body per se but recognition of its unpopularity with northern nationalists. Mr Bruton argued in Strasbourg that, "any device, however well crafted or logical, which attracts one set of parties but repels another is not enough". On the contrary, Mr Bruton's response is

not enough. He should use his influence with the SDLP and Sinn Fein to show them that elections are a bridge and not a snare. He should act as a persuader for democracy.

Mr Major has recognised that nationalists are wary of a body that might evolve into another instrument for narrow majority rule within Ulster and has pledged to address their concerns. What have they to fear from exploring Mr Major's ideas? Proportional representation could ensure a place for parties currently excluded. A weighted majority system could prevent any section of the community having its interests over-riden.

The Ulster Unionists have already moved to allay some nationalist concerns. In the Commons yesterday their Deputy Leader, John Taylor, made it clear he saw an elected body as a peace convention, not Stormont by stealth. He also reiterated the need for any body to incorporate a cross-border dimension. The Unionists recognise any purely internal settlement could not work and do not want one. They have shown an imagination which the SDLP would do well to emulate. The intransigence which was once the hallmark of Unionist thinking now seems to be set deeper in the nationalist mind.

It is not only nationalists south of the border who might, with profit, coax the SDLP into a more constructive position: their fellow social democrats at Westminster could play a part. Labour's Northern Ireland spokesman, Marjorie Mowlam, sought yesterday to ensure that any move to elections commanded "widespread agreement". She was speaking up for the SDLP. Talking directly to them about the merits of the elective process would also be welcome.

If the Irish Government and the Westminster consensus swing behind the Prime Minister then democratic habits will have a chance to take firmer root in Ulster. Elections will eventually determine Northern Ireland's future. The sooner the people of the Province have a chance to speak, the better.

GERMAN ECONOMIC GLOOM

After its miracle, Germany needs painful renewal

Even as Helmut Kohl is promising to create two million new jobs to relieve soaring unemployment in Germany, his Government is making predictions that all but destroy hopes of a quick fix to Germany's looming economic problems. A report by Jürgen Rüttgers, the federal minister for research, science and technology, has given a warning that Germany is falling behind in the race to build up high technology industries. It is investing less than its competitors in information technology, bio-engineering and aerospace. Its industrial leaders have become complacent and fearful of taking risks. By sticking to proven exports such as cars and pharmaceuticals, they are jeopardising Germany's lead in key exports. The country is increasingly living off past success.

Even the present industrial base is being eroded by high costs and restrictive practices. Firms are locating new plants in cheaper neighbouring countries (including Britain); Germany's low investment is undermining its edge over the dynamic economies of Asia. Growth is expected to be 1.5 per cent this year, and companies are shedding jobs in key sectors such as aerospace.

The warning from Herr Rüttgers is the more urgent in view of alarming figures on the burgeoning social security budget. Like other wealthy continental countries that in the late 1980s saw no end to the boom, Germany is living beyond its means. Generous social provision is overburdening employers, taxpayers and government. Entrenched union power, the inflexibility of central wage bargaining and the political consensus on the need to protect workers' entitlements mean that it is difficult for the country now to tighten its belt. The Dutch and the Swedes

have begun to rein in social spending; apart from making big cuts in health provision, Germans have so far shied away from the surgery they know must soon be performed.

Being Germany, there are plenty of doom-sayers. Herr Kohl himself has campaigned on the need to make the country more competitive. His grand design to cut unemployment by half over the next four years frankly acknowledges the need for more flexible — and longer — working hours, for more innovative management and for more union concessions. But the political will to alter the economic framework, sweep away restrictions and refinance the social security budget is lacking. Germany's Christian Democrats have a working-class base, with his narrow majority and tottering coalition, Herr Kohl is afraid of alienating his voters. The Social Democrats, as usual, are dithering. And the small Free Democratic Party, struggling to find any new identity to save it from extinction, is fragmenting, with some members moving to the right and others returning to the Social Democratic fold.

Germany has a tradition of high investment, which has helped it meet the challenge of reunification. The danger is that after this extraordinary success the country will relax, taking its eye off the greater challenge of future competitiveness. Many Germans, including Herr Kohl, still seem to believe that economic salvation lies in rigging the European market with a single currency (a disguised devaluation) and a "strengthened" social chapter (a disguised tax on EU labour that would reduce the global competitiveness of all European countries). But in the end, no amount of market rigging will avoid the need for painful economic readjustments.

TRUMPS FOR ALL

Bridge is queen of sports, for mind, memory and merry chance

Folk wisdom recommends that one should not cross a bridge until one comes to it. But today bridge, the card game named after man's oldest architectural structure, comes to everyone who has ever been dealt a lay-down slam or a Yarborough. As reported in our sports pages, *The Times* Midland Private Banking national bridge challenge launches Britain's biggest bridge tournament. For the first time players of all abilities, from grand master to social rabbit who can never get back into dummy in three no trumps, have a chance to compete. This is a democratisation of the rich man's game, now played by 250,000 competitively in this country, and by two million socially, for the fun of a penny a point and post mortems.

The champions will win serious money. The surplus, estimated at £100,000, will be given to the National Trust. That is a worthy recipient, not just because bridge is played in palaces as well as bed-sitters, but because the trust owns the card-rooms left in this country. Cards have been an Englishman's sport since they were invented. And all inhabitants of the United Kingdom are divided into three parties: bridge-players, poker-players and those who cannot handle cards.

From its foundation manifesto 211 years ago, *The Times* has found space for sports as well as the heavier stuff of politics. Its founding father declared that his newspaper should be like a well-covered table, with something to suit every palate. Bridge was invented by Harold Vanderbilt on a Carib-

bean cruise in 1925. The socially-intellectual game caught the mood of the Twenties as characteristically as cocktails and the Charleston. And *The Times* appointed its first bridge correspondent. His first column began: "Bridge has been having a hard time. If it were not a game of superlative merits, it might quite reasonably have gone under."

Luckily he was wrong. Bridge has survived and become one of the most popular activities in that no-man's land between games, sports and serious gambling. *Times* bridge correspondents have been a noble band of eccentric masters of the game, who have invented the conventions and made the rules. Edward Mayer, our bridge correspondent from 1953 to 1980, was the last of the old-fashioned London clubmen. On the first bridge ladies' night in clubland, his American partner asked brusquely: "OK if I call you Ed?" He replied with the emphasis of a killing pass: "But Madam, if you call me Ed, what are my friends to call me?"

Chess will always be the king of games, because it combines memory and intellect with daring and psychology. But bridge is the queen, because it has all those, with a bit of luck and social intercourse thrown in, even if post mortems do not always make comfortable colloquia. So our new bridge competition will add to the gaiety of nations, the revenues of the National Trust, and the innocent profits of those who dare to bid right up to the limits of their hands, and even beyond.

Labour's education policy and the Harman affair

1 Pemington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

From the Headmaster of Caistor Grammar School.

Sir, The Labour Party claims to be committed to offering parents choice and to raising educational standards (letters, January 24). Yet it is also opposed to all selection by interview and examination. Further, it will allow local ballots in order to propose the closure of grammar schools (report, June 23, 1995).

There is an important inconsistency in this position. Parents want to be able to choose their child's school. Most would prefer to be able to choose from a range of successful, effective schools.

Such choice is extended through a diversity of provision. Changing successful and popular schools does not help to raise standards — quite the reverse.

If the Labour Party wishes to be consistent and to respond to popular opinion it would allow local ballots to take place not only on closing grammar schools but as to whether selection should be extended. If local opinion wanted this, it would happen.

As the headmaster of a successful grammar school surrounded by other successful schools that are not selective, I am not calling for a full-scale return to selection. But it seems perverse to talk of extending parental choice when the actual effect of policy is to remove it.

Let us hope Mr Blair will now have the courage to accept this and take prompt action to change it. He should allow parents the option to vote for more selection.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER HALE,
Headmaster,
Caistor Grammar School,
Caistor, Lincolnshire,
January 25.

From Mr Stuart Sexton

Sir, There are sound educational reasons why children of all abilities achieve more academically if they are taught in groups of similar ability. They therefore need to be selected into such groups of similar ability. A comparison made in 1975-76 of the

examination results of the comprehensives on the one hand and of the grammars and secondary moderns, taken together, on the other, showed that children were much more likely to achieve a higher academic standard in the selective system.

I conducted the research on which that comparison was based. Between 1979 and 1981 Dr John Marks conducted more extensive research into the statistics of examination results, and came up with the same conclusion.

The comprehensives were introduced to advance social egalitarianism, not to raise academic standards. If we wish to raise educational standards for all children, not just the brightest, we need to restore the selective system of grammar schools and secondary moderns. Those secondary moderns themselves should be more specialised in certain subjects than they used to be.

Yours faithfully,
STUART SEXTON
(Director, Education Unit),
Warrington Park School,
Cheltenham Common,
Warrington, Surrey,
January 23.

From Mr Patrick Vincent

Sir, No one appears to doubt that Harriet Harman is committed to Labour's education policy, and her choice of a grammar school now is out as a matter of logic incompatible with a genuine (if mistaken) belief that a policy which eliminated grammar schools in the future would have universal educational benefits.

Her actions are no more hypocritical than those of an MP who advocates higher taxes but does not voluntarily pay his or her extra slice to the Treasury.

Ms Harman may well have given ammunition to the opponents of Labour's education policy, but she does not deserve attacks on her integrity.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK VINCENT,
12 Kings Bench Walk, Temple, E.C.4,
January 23.

From Mr Roger A. Jarman

Sir, Though I suspect he may not realise it, Mr James McFarlane (letter, January 24) deserves congratulations for his apt comparison between selective schools and football teams. Both are ruthless in picking those who will give them the best results and discarding those who will not perform; for neither is the personal development of the individual a priority.

The sooner we get away from a system that sets school against school, parent against parent, pupil against pupil in an unhealthy competition for higher league places, the sooner we will have an educational system which truly works for the good of all children.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER JARMAN,
67 Cowley Road, Oxford,
January 24.

From Professor Stewart D. Hodges

Sir, I lived in Orpington as a school-boy and attended St Olave's Grammar School between 1956 and 1963. At that time the school was not in Orpington: it was on Tooley Street, beside the dockside warehouses just south of Tower Bridge, and in the heart of Bermondsey and Southwark.

School services were held in Southwark Cathedral. St Olave's was founded in Southwark in the sixteenth century and makes an apt choice for a Southwark family.

The train journey I took between Orpington and London Bridge is probably no more onerous now than it was then — except that I could enjoy for a while the novelty of riding home in a steam train, often pulled by a Public Schools-class locomotive, and even occasionally by "St Olave's".

Had the inner-London politics of the time been less vehemently opposed to selective schools Southwark might have been able to retain this fine school.

Yours sincerely,
STEWART HODGES (Director,
Financial Options Research Centre),
University of Warwick,
Coventry CV4 7AL,
January 23.

Lessons for the young

From the Head Master of Westminster School

Sir, Schools are scolded for failing to communicate those commandments of moral value (letters, January 20, 23) which Dr Nick Tate wishes to impose on our pupils. But what are schools to make of the lip-smacking greed which surrounds such events as Granada's takeover of Forté?

We are told that advisers in the City are estimated to gain £150 million for helping to conduct such success (reports, January 24).

And how are we expected to respond to the tantalising lure of National Lottery jackpots? What sort of values are these which the adult world proposes?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID SUMMERSCALE,
Head Master,
Westminster School,
17 Dean's Yard, SW1,
January 24.

Trial by jury

From Mr F. L. Ward

Sir, As one who has been involved over a number of years with forensic work as a professional expert witness, and who has also served on a jury, I would like to suggest that the answer to the doubts about the jury system in complex trials is not to discard the jury (letters, January 23).

In my view, the best procedure would be to provide a small panel of appropriate specialists to advise the jury; the panel having no responsibility for the final decision.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK WARD,
13 Johnsons Drive,
Hampton,
Middlesex,
January 21.

Jazz legacy

From Mr Nick Solomon

Sir, It was sad to read (obituary, January 22) of the death of Gerry Mulligan — one of a handful of instantly identifiable white jazz players in the music's history.

Your obituarist made one comment with which I cannot agree, that "most great jazz artists have matured only in their thirties". I asked to remember Thelonius Monk, looked about the precocious talent of the then young Keith Jarrett, replying: "If you ain't no good when you're 19, you ain't never gonna be no good."

But then again, so few jazz masters have barely made it into their thirties and forties (Ayer, Brown, Coltrane, Dolphy... and on through the alphabet) that we'll never know.

Despite the legacy of their recordings, the music really does die with these people. I wonder whether any jazz musician now under 40 will merit so much obituary space in 20 or 30 years' time.

Yours faithfully,
NICK SOLOMON,
Harpfields, Burford,
Tenbury Wells,
Hereford and Worcester,
January 23.

Review of kidney patient services

From Professor N. P. Mallik

Sir, Your report of January 22, headed "Dialysis shortfall kills hundreds", states that the national review of renal services which I chaired — and which the Department of Health set up when it recognised a shortfall — was sent to ministers 18 months ago and has been blocked by the Treasury since then (see also letter, January 24). Perhaps I could clarify the course of events.

The review commenced in the summer of 1993. Each of the 14 then regions of the National Health Service in England was visited and evidence was taken directly from clinicians and purchasing commissions as to the present and future pattern of renal services. Information was obtained on providing a cost-effective service from all renal units concerning the facilities, staff, patients and funding.

The three-part review, presented in December 1994, was internal to the Department of Health. Many departmental officers contributed to its findings. There is a textual commentary, the detail of the analysis of the data collected, and a purchaser guidance text to assist those who have to organise and purchase renal services.

While at no time were assurances sought by me that the review itself would be published, departmental officers have been considering whether

this guidance can stand alone or whether it would be better to publish the report as a whole. This is an internal matter for the Department of Health.

Departmental officers have worked hard to assimilate all the conclusions of the review and arrange for these to be taken into account in providing funds for NHS services. There have been discussions as to its cost implications — understandable when projections extend for a decade or more.

Nevertheless, the broad pattern of costs is available, and I understand that the department will shortly be able to issue the purchasing guidance, so that health authorities and trusts can reflect it in their plans for 1996-97 and beyond.

This will be of reassurance to patients, to their families and to those who have to care for them. It will provide a clear message that the department has been aware of a problem in managing renal disease in the United Kingdom, and has been prepared to address the issue and to take steps to put matters right.

Yours sincerely,
NETAR MALLICK
(Consultant physician),
Manchester Royal Infirmary,
Department of Renal Medicine,
Oxford Road, Manchester 13,
January 23.

Risk to game shooting

From Mr Allan W. Berry

Sir, Mr Leolin Price, QC (letter, January 18), suggests that officials from the Brussels Commission should be dismissed for banning the drug Emtryl and that those Ministry of Agriculture officers who failed to block the proposed legislation should meet a similar fate.

His letter concludes that nothing should have stopped our Government from exercising power to protect our interest.

The decision to ban the use of dimetridazole (Emtryl), a treatment for protozoan parasite infestation of game birds, was taken after considering scientific advice that the mutagenic and carcinogenic properties of the drug were such that a safe minimum residue level could not be set. The UK claimed otherwise.

The suggestion in your report (January 13) that the ban could wipe out about 10 million birds indicates that most of our game bird industry, like many other facets of our society, is drug-dependent.

Heavy losses from parasite infestation usually result from overstocking. This may be the real root of the problem.

Turning a blind eye, as the Government seems to be proposing to do, to criminal drug-misuse may result in contaminated exports being rejected as unfit for human consumption.

Such Euro-dodging could reasonably be regarded as a manifestation of greed and irresponsibility, rather than the protection of the UK interest.

Yours sincerely,
ALLAN W. BERRY,
Nurses House,
Cannich, Beaulieu, Inverness-shire,
January 21.

Are rabies rules cruel or necessary?

From Mr Harry Turcan

Sir, As the owner of a dog which fell victim to what Simon Jenkins describes as the Government's hypocritical enforcement of its obsolete rabies regulations ("Englishmen and mad dogs", January 2) I should like to endorse the points he makes so forcefully.

Our West Highland terrier accompanied us on a scheduled flight from Edinburgh to London but the airline failed to unload her at Heathrow and the plane took off for Amsterdam. The dog spent the night in a government-approved isolation unit and was returned to London under escort on the first plane next morning. Reasoned applications for a waiver of the regulations supported by, amongst others, the chief veterinary officer of the RSPCA, fell on deaf ears and the dog spent six expensive and totally unnecessary months in a quarantine kennel.

In a pathetic attempt to avoid the issue being referred to the European Court our beleaguered Government now allows breeding dogs to be imported without being subjected to the regulations but domestic pets must still serve their six months inside.

It is, I believe, now beyond argument that a properly vaccinated dog brings with it no risk of rabies, whereas the continued enforcement of these outdated regulations provides a powerful incentive to avoid them by smuggling a possibly unvaccinated pet into this country.

Yours faithfully,
H. W. TURCAN,
4 Paper Buildings, Temple, E.C.4,
January 22.

From Dr Surinder Singh Bakshi

Sir, Threat of rabies in England may be remote but is still real. A dog incubating rabies was brought by air from Turkey to rabies-free Düsseldorf, Germany, under its more relaxed rules in April 1995. The city was panic-stricken. Hundreds of contacts had to be searched for in Germany and abroad to receive post-exposure vaccination. Düsseldorf was placed under quarantine. Movement of dogs and cats had to be restricted and many were confined in quarantine.

Only eight of the 36 European countries are recognised to be free of rabies by the World Health Organisation. Germany, France, Spain, Belgium and Switzerland are some of the countries which are not. Freedom from rabies, and securing our borders against it, means that our pets do not have to be vaccinated, the cost of which would amount to far more than the £200 million in kennel fees which Mr Jenkins finds so inequitable.

A time may come when the stringent quarantine rules could be relaxed, but not yet.

Yours faithfully,
SURINDER SINGH BAKSHI,
Birmingham Communicable Disease Unit,
Bordesley House,
45 Bordesley Green East,
Birmingham 9,
January 22.

Frogs and paraquat

From Dr David A. Evans

Sir, Your report (early editions, January 17) that paraquat has been identified as a possible cause of the worldwide decline in frog numbers. This refers to US research which showed that tadpoles were affected when forced in the laboratory to feed exclusively on aquatic weed killed by paraquat.

Paraquat is not used for weed control in water in the UK and USA and, when used for weed control on land, cannot leach into water as it locks on to clay particles in the soil. Any paraquat entering water from airborne spray drift would be at concentrations 100-1,000 times lower than that used in the US research.

Loss of habitat, such as farm ponds and marshlands, is probably the main factor affecting frog populations in this country. English Nature's initiative to focus attention on the role of the garden pond could provide valuable alternative habitats. Whatever the cause of the decline, it cannot be paraquat, since there is no significant exposure of the frog population to this herbicide.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID A. EVANS
(Research & Development Director),
Zeneca Agrochemicals,
Fernhurst, Haslemere, Surrey,
January 24.

Standing for gallantry

From Mr David Hide

Sir, Did not the amply-proportioned Hilaire Belloc proudly proclaim: "I give up my seat on the bus to two ladies?" (letters, January 20, 24).

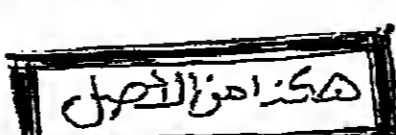
Yours more modestly,
DAVID HIDE,
24 Towers Avenue,
Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne.

From Mr A. J. C. Saunders

Sir, The lady to whom I recently surrendered my seat on a bus said, a few stops later: "I'm sorry, I thought you wanted to get off." I assured her that at my age (83) I did not, but I thanked her for the compliment.

Yours faithfully,
A. J. C. SAUNDERS,
32 Manor Wood Road,
Purley, Surrey.

Letters for publication should carry contact telephone numbers. We regret that we cannot accept letters by telephone but they may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5046.



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM, NORFOLK
January 28: Divine Service was held in Sandringham Parish Church this morning.

the garden at Highgrove House in aid of the National Trust in the Peak District, followed by a Reception at the Buxton Opera House, Derbyshire.

Birthdays today

Dr R.C. Alston, bibliographer, 63; Mr Malcolm Bines, concert pianist, 60; Mr Leslie Brucce, composer and lyricist, 65; Major-General Sir George Burns, 88; Major Peter Byrne, actor, 68; Lord Clyde, 64; Dr Alec Coppen, psychiatrist, 76; the Right Rev Charles Fitzgerald-Lambard, Abbot of Downside, 55; Mr John Gallagher, rugby league player, 32; Dr Germaine Greer, author, 57; Lord Gremson, 72; Professor F.R. Hartley, Vice-Chancellor, Cranfield University, 54; Mr Paul Hodder-Williams, publisher, 86; Earl Howe, 45; Mr John Junkin, actor and writer, 66; Mr Sean Kelly, hockey player, 35; Mrs Margaret Laird, 70; Mrs Church Estates Commissioner, 63; Lord Lane of Horsell, 71; Mr Michael Mavor, Head Master, Rugby School, 49; Mr Richard Needham, MR 35; Mr James Nicholson, MEP, 51; Mr Peter Roberts, cricketer, 45; Professor Abdus Salam, theoretical physicist, 70; Mr Tom Sellock, actor, 51; Mr Ramzan Subba Row, former chairman, Text and Couture Council Board, 64; Viscount Tontypanady, 87; Mr Brian Trubshaw, former test pilot, 72; Mr Israel Wehrin, managing director, Eloxex, 49.

Today's royal engagements

The Princess of Wales will attend a luncheon given by the Association of American Correspondents in London at Brown's Hotel at 12.30.

Today's events

The Queen's Life Guard mounts at Horse Guards at 11.00.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Emmanuël Swedborg, philosopher, Stockholm, 1808; Daniel Bernoulli, mathematician, Groningen, 1700; Thomas Paine, radical and writer, 1737; Henry James, poet, London, 1798; Sir Neale O'Shea, general, Bulmerley, 1803; William McKelvey, 25th President, 1827-1901; Niles, Ohio, 1843; Sir Ebenezer Howard, pioneer of garden cities, London, 1850; Anton Chekhov, playwright, Taganrog, Russia, 1860; Frederick Delius, composer, Bradford, 1862; Romain Rolland, novelist, Noisy-lez-Paris, 1915; Clamence, France, 1866; Vicente Blasco Ibañez, writer and politician, Valencia, 1867; Haverhill Brian, composer, Dresden, 1876; W.C. Fields, actor and comedian, Philadelphia, 1880.

The Countess of Denbigh and Desmond

The Countess of Denbigh and Desmond, following the marriage of her son, the Earl of Denbigh and Desmond, on the January 27, 1996, will be known as the Dowager Countess of Denbigh and Desmond.

Dinner

British Invincibles were the hosts at a dinner held last night at the Savoy Hotel in honour of Mr Erico Zedillo, President of Mexico. Among those present were: Mr Andrew Burton, Mr Leopold de Rothschild, Mr Nicholas Barling, Mr Hessel Lindenberg, Mr John W. Wick, Mr Adair Turner, Mr Paul Zuckerman, Mr William Tudor John.

Memorial services

Sir Ivan Ewart
A service of thanksgiving for the life of Sir Ivan Ewart, business man and charity worker, was held yesterday at the Church of St Malachy, Hillsborough, County Down.

The Ven Peter Eliot
A service of thanksgiving for the Ven Peter Charles Eliot was held on Saturday in Worcester Cathedral. The Archbishop of Worcester officiated, assisted by the Ven J.C. Williams who led the act of thanksgiving.

Professor T. Brooke Benjamin
A memorial service for Professor T. Brooke Benjamin, Sedilian Professor of Natural Philosophy at Oxford, was held on Saturday at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin.

YORK HOUSE
January 28: The Duchess of Kent this evening presented the Evening Standard British Film Awards, at the Savoy Hotel, London WC2.

Lieutenancy of Essex

The following deputy lieutenancy commissions have been announced: John McCrindle Smith, Lieutenant-Colonel Christopher Benbow, Major Stuart and Professor Patrick Riley gave readings. Professor David Crighan gave an address.

University news

Oxford, Magdalen College
To a fixed-term fellowship in English (for five years from October 1, 1996). Susan Jennier Hitch, MA.



The Duke of Edinburgh facing a chilly journey home from Sandringham Church yesterday

Forthcoming marriages

Mr W. Anderson and Miss L.G. Coppell
The engagement is announced between William, son of Mr and Mrs F. Anderson, of Dunboyne, Co Meath, and Lucy, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs N.J. Coppell, of Drumbo, Co Antrim.

Mr J.L. Holden and Miss S.A. Dawson
The engagement is announced between James, eldest son of Mr Ralph Holden and Mrs Linda Holden, of Oldham, Lancashire, and Samantha, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Graham Dawson, of Rothwell, Yorkshire.

Mr T.W.H. Lloyd-Jones and Miss L.S. de Vogheliers Parr
The engagement is announced between Thomas, youngest son of the late Colonel John Lloyd-Jones and Mrs Mary Lloyd-Jones, of Guilford, Surrey, and Isabel, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Trevor Parr, of Widnespool, Nottinghamshire.

Appointments in the Forces

Royal Navy and Royal Marines
CAPTAIN: T.M. Hare, MoD Bath 22.03.96; R.H. Hiscock, JMCOTS Turnhouse 26.04.96; T. Morton, Staff of POSF 24.05.96; R.C. Pelly, MoD Bath 12.04.96; E.F. Searle, NBC Portsmouth 19.03.96.

COMMANDER: D.J. Fildes, Loan CDA HLS West Byfleet 22.03.96; G. Preston, MoD London 26.04.96; P.N. Hilbert, Loan CDA ADAC Farnborough 29.03.96; M.A. Horrell, Staff of FOST Sea 14.05.96; G.R. Johnson, BGS Washington 07.05.96; C.J. Merritt, EHQ Northwood 01.04.96; A.G.P. Pounder, SA/LANT USA 03.05.96; S.A. Thomas, Staff of ISL/CNH 09.05.96; P.W.A. Wearmouth, Staff of CINCELEP 19.04.96.

SURGEON COMMANDER: P.J. Burton, RH Haslar 26.07.96; S.J. Ryder, Exchange USA 01.04.96.

Retirements
COMMANDER: J. Davis, 22.04.96; L.N.L. Gallen, 03.04.96.

Marriages

Mr S.J. Reeve-Tucker and Miss L.M. Barran
The marriage took place on Saturday at the Church of Our Most Holy Redeemer and St Thomas More, Chelsea, of Mr Stephen Reeve-Tucker, fourth son of the late Lieutenant-Colonel T.S.W. Reeve-Tucker and of Mrs Reeve-Tucker, of Ross-on-Wye, to Miss Lalage Barran, younger daughter of Sir David and Lady Barran, of Kensington Square, London.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Emily and Cosmo Barran, Laetitia Lucy, Camilla Millard, Casimir Owen-Edmunds, Oliver Pougale, Arabella Reeve-Tucker, Clementine Reeve-Tucker, Olivia and Alexander Reeve-Tucker, Jessica Vernon and Oswald Woloshyn. Mr Robert Finlayson was best man.

A reception was held at the Duke of York's Headquarters and the honeymoon will be spent abroad.

Latest wills

Mr Michael Barrie Goudeau, of Aldridge, Walsall, West Midlands, left estate valued at £91,276 net. He left his estate to the charity The Crystal Group, Browns Ridge Cottage, Fairwarp, Uckfield.

Mrs Margorie Maria, of Burnham, Buckinghamshire, left estate valued at £1,020,177 net. After personal bequests she left the residue equally between the RSPCA, National Trust, RSPB, International League for the Protection of Horses, RNID, RNIB and RUKBA.

Mrs Francis Martin Payne, of Poole, Dorset, left estate valued at £6,923,096 net.

Mr Harry Ridehalgh, of London SW6, former senior partner in the international consulting engineers Sir William Halcrow and Partners, left estate valued at £1,462,621 net.

Mr Leo Frederick Leftman, of London NW8, left estate valued at £3,160,988 net.

Among several bequests he left £50,000 to the British Blind Society and £100,000 equally between Battersea Dogs Home, the National Airline Distance League and Blue Cross.

Mr David Harry Walls, of Aldeburgh, Suffolk, left estate valued at £5,762,544 net.

Other estates include (net, before tax): Mrs Sheila Valerie Benson, of Tring, Herts, £120,180; Mr George Gell, £109,376; Mrs Patricia Betty Nicholls, of Cheltenham, £108,136; Betty Taylor, of Hindhead, Surrey £63,154; Mrs Sarah Kathleen West, of Harrgate, £11,108.

Researchers rethink clues to Dublin's Viking past

By NORMAN HAMMOND, ARCHAEOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

THE origins of Dublin, long thought to have begun as a Viking fortress close to the later castle of the English viceroys, may have been wrongly located by archaeologists.

Recent re-analysis of two Viking cemeteries excavated more than a century ago suggests that the Irish capital began more than a mile further upstream on the Liffey. A monastery was taken over and turned into an armed camp.

The Viking cemeteries at Islandbridge and Kilmalinhum, on the western outskirts of the Georgian city, were found when gravel digging and railway construction took place in the mid-19th century. They yielded spectacular finds of weapons and ornaments, so similar to Viking goods from Scandinavia that watercolour paintings were

given to the national museum in Copenhagen. The exact findspots have long remained obscure. However Elizabeth O'Brien has now recovered information from official files and railway records that shows the existence of two distinct burial grounds, both on a prominent gravel ridge and one adjacent to a monastic site.

Both proved to contain pagan Viking and also native Christian graves; the Viking grave goods dated the burials to the later 9th century, coeval with the Viking longphort or trading settlement known to have existed between AD 841 and 902.

"It would seem unlikely that the occupants of a longphort at the Liffey-Poddle confluence [where the centre of medieval Dublin lies] would have been prepared to travel at least a mile upstream, probably through hostile territory, to bury their dead," Ms O'Brien says in *Archaeology Ireland*.

"It seems much more likely that the burials represent Vikings living in that area in the 9th century."

Viking usurpation of monastic establishments is well-known from England: in AD 874 they took over the Repton monastery on the Trent and fortified it, turning the church into a blockhouse. The Kilmalinhum monastery enclosure, and the Islandbridge ford across the Liffey no doubt offered similar logistical advantages, Ms O'Brien argues.

The walled town of Dublin was not founded until AD 917, as one of a series of Viking urban centres that included Cork, Limerick, and Waterford; excavations in the 1970s at the famous Wood Quay site uncovered dozens of houses and well-preserved artefacts, close to Christ Church Cathedral and Dublin Castle, the most visible signs of the city's later prosperity.

The earlier phase of Viking penetration of Ireland, between the first recorded raid in AD 795 and the abandonment of the Dublin longphort in 902, has now begun to emerge as the result of research. Writing in the same special issue of *Archaeology Ireland*, John Bradley of University College Dublin notes that place names such as Smerwick, runestones and burials document a series of short-lived settlements as far away as Galway and Kerry in the far south-west.

The most recent discovery, by a joint team from the universities in Cork and Belfast, is at Lonehorrt Harbour, on Bere Island in western Cork. Underwater survey by the Belfast archaeologists revealed a stone breakwater and jetty, while on land a naust or boathouse was excavated by the Crok team.

□ Source: *Archaeology Ireland* Vol 9 No 3 (Issue 33)

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FAX: 0171 481 9313

PERSONAL COLUMN

DEATHS

DAVIE - Ina Henderson, beloved wife of the late Sir Paul, died peacefully on 24th January, Private Crematorium, Mortlake, Surrey. Burial will be held at St Mary the Virgin, Mortlake, Surrey, on 29th January 2.30 pm on Wednesday 29th February. No flowers.

DEATHS - Norma Jane Sykes on 24th January, peacefully at the London Clinic, aged 72 years. Burial at Highgate Cemetery, London, on 29th January 2.30 pm. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations for Cancer Research may be sent c/o W. Gordon & Son, 12 Church Street, London, W1R 1PG.

LEE - On 11th January 1996, in Brentwood, Surrey, after a long illness, the late Mrs. Lillian Lee, nee O'Connell, aged 87 years. Burial at Highgate Cemetery, London, on 29th January 2.30 pm. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations for Cancer Research may be sent c/o W. Gordon & Son, 12 Church Street, London, W1R 1PG.

MACADIE - Muriel Olive Macadie, on 26th January 1996, aged 85, peacefully at Deltwood Community Hospital, Brentwood, Essex. Burial at Highgate Cemetery, London, on 29th January 2.30 pm. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations for Cancer Research may be sent c/o W. Gordon & Son, 12 Church Street, London, W1R 1PG.

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CLIFTON - Alys Bridget suddenly on January 24th, much loved sister and Aunt. Service 2.00 pm Tuesday January 30th at Lambhurst Fawcett Crematorium. Flowers or donations to the British Red Cross.

DEATHS - Alan Curtis died 28 January after a long illness. Dearly loved and much mourned by his wife Claire and son Simon. Donation private. Donations if wished to Alzheimer's Society, Salisbury.

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HILLARD - Monica Constance, beloved wife of Richard, died peacefully at her home on 26th January 1996, aged 82 years. Burial at Highgate Cemetery, London, on 29th January 2.30 pm. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations for Cancer Research may be sent c/o W. Gordon & Son, 12 Church Street, London, W1R 1PG.

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OBITUARIES

WING COMMANDER RODERICK LEAROYD, VC

Wing Commander Roderick Leary, VC, one of the last three surviving RAF holders of the Victoria Cross, died on January 24 aged 82. He was born on February 5, 1913.

"BABE" LEAROYD, as the RAF knew him, won his VC for conspicuous gallantry during a bombing raid on the Dortmund-Ems Canal in 1940. The skill and courage he had displayed while flying his Hampden aircraft through heavy ground-fire at low altitude, had already come to the attention of 49 Squadron long before his most famous mission on the night of August 12, 1940, in the year of the Battle of Britain and of Dunkirk.

His citation in the London Gazette described how Acting Flight Lieutenant Leary, then aged 27, had been detailed to attack a special objective on the canal, which he had targeted once already on a previous sortie. He was, therefore, only too well aware of the risks entailed.

In order to achieve maximum success, it was necessary to make his approach from a direction well known to the enemy, through a "lane" of carefully sited anti-aircraft batteries. The enemy was able to respond with devastating fire power from point-blank range. The reception given to the preceding aircraft, "might well have deterred the stoutest heart," read the citation. All machines had been hit by the enemy and two had been lost. His own bomber was repeatedly hit and large chunks torn away from the fuselage as Flight Lieutenant Leary laid his attack at 150ft above the guns, half blinded by the glare of the German searchlights directed on to him from close range.

It was his resolution in pressing home his successful attack against such odds that earned for Leary the Victoria Cross. He was wounded in the raid but subsequently brought his wrecked aircraft home. As the landing flaps were not working and the undercarriage indicators were also out of action, he had to wait until dawn in the skies above his home airfield before being



able to land. Even so, he eventually accomplished this without injury to his crew or inflicting further damage on the bomber.

"The high degree of courage, skill and determination which this officer had invariably displayed on many occasions in the face of the enemy, sets an example which is unsurpassed," the citation ended. Yet, although the RAF later used him to go round Britain on a morale-boosting tour during the dark-

est days of the war, Leary was a shy, unassuming man who rarely talked much about his exploits over Germany.

Born at Folkestone, Kent, Roderick Alastair Brook Leary was the son of a major in the Highland Light Infantry who had served in the First World War. But the family had both a Yorkshire and Scottish background and at one time was involved in the Yorkshire textile industry.

On leaving Wellington College, Rod — as the family knew him — went to work for a while for an uncle who owned a fruit farm in Argentina. On returning home from there in 1936, however, he took a short service commission in the RAF. He, therefore, found himself immediately swept up by the outbreak of the Second World War.

On being demobilised in 1945, Leary served for a while in Malaya as a pilot for the Governor of the then British colony. He then worked at Heathrow for a while before joining the British Motor Corporation (BMC), with whom he remained for the rest of his working life. He was sent to work for the company at one time in the United States, returning to serve in various capacities in this country.

At one time he was the head of its fleet sales, particularly to government departments. At another he was involved in the company's public relations division and throughout his time with BMC he was repeatedly used as an unofficial ambassador. His natural charm and his wartime reputation made him highly valued by senior managers in Birmingham as a front man overseas.

In private life, as well as professionally, Leary had a lifelong passion for cars, particularly for Aston Martins. He regularly attended the Le Mans 24-hour race and was also a frequent visitor to Silverstone. He was a keen golfer in his younger days.

Leary, whose portrait hangs in the Imperial War Museum, was an active member of the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association, regularly attending its dinners and receptions in London. He went to last year's VE-Day celebrations in London when he was driven around the arena in a Rolls-Royce. But he suffered increasingly from diabetes, which affected his sight in his later years and forced him to give up driving himself.

DR ROBERT WEIR

Dr Robert Weir, CB, Chief Medical Officer, Northern Ireland, 1978-86, died on January 7 aged 67. He was born on October 29, 1928.



ROBERT WEIR was the head of the Government's medical service in Northern Ireland during the IRA hunger strikes in 1981 when ten men starved themselves to death in the Maze Prison. That the prison medical service should have maintained its standard of professional integrity and continued to treat prisoners and their families as patients and the relatives of patients was in no small way due to the courage and independence of mind of the Chief Medical Officer.

Bob Weir was born into a farming family in Co Londonderry and he never lost his countryman's common sense. Educated at Kianey Endowed School, Magherafelt, he entered Trinity College Dublin in 1945 taking degrees in arts and medicine. He graduated with a first in 1951 and, after postgraduate studies in cardiology with Professor Frank Partridge in Belfast, he became MD with a gold medal in 1955.

A brilliant career beckoned as a cardiologist. But he elected instead for general practice in Newry, where his diagnostic skill and compassion made him a much loved figure in the rural community.

In 1963 he joined the Medical Referee Service and quickly moved to the policy and planning staff of the then Ministry of Health and Social Services. In 1972, he became Deputy Chief Medical Officer, and in 1978 was appointed

Chief Medical Officer, a post he was to hold until his retirement at the end of 1986.

His main achievement as Chief Medical Officer was to forge links between the professional and the administrative sides of the department and between the department and the medical profession. He was unquestionably the leader of the profession in Northern Ireland, respected by his colleagues for his own clinical experience and trusted by them to express their concerns at the highest level of government. Equally, he could be depended upon to give his views honestly. His advice carried a weight of authority and an intellectual coherence which could not be discounted.

Weir worked hard to make politicians aware of the concerns of the profession, and to convey to his professional colleagues the stark realities of public expenditure. His network of speciality advisory committees brought clinicians into the debate and ensured greater understanding of both

sides. He also pioneered a more rational approach to hospital development and the location of major services.

His role as Chief Medical Officer meant that he was the principal source of medical advice to all departments in Northern Ireland. This advice was critical in dealing with issues as disparate as the effect of listeria on the dairy industry, or salmonella on poultry farming and the fallout from Chernobyl on sheep farming in Co Antrim, asbestosis or the onset of AIDS.

But his greatest contribution to public service may well have been his professional responsibility for the prison medical service at a time when very serious questions were being raised about the treatment of prisoners. There were visits of inspection, during his period in office, from the International Red Cross, Amnesty and other Human Rights organisations.

Throughout all this he faced many moral, ethical and political dilemmas, and worked under considerable personal stress. He dealt sensitively and decisively with the unprecedented problems of the hunger strikers, and of the need for medical supervision in police holding centres where allegations of ill treatment were commonplace.

He was appointed CB in 1984. On his retirement in 1986, despite failing health, he undertook part-time medical assessment work, addressing the problems of occupational diseases and the emergence of new threats such as BSE.

He is survived by his wife June (nee Shuttleworth), whom he married in 1955, and by one son and two daughters.

PROFESSOR SYLVIA LAWLER

Professor Sylvia Lawler, geneticist, died on January 17 aged 74. She was born on January 15, 1922.

SYLVIA LAWLER was a pioneer in mapping the human genome, and the first woman professor of the Institute of Cancer Research, 1980-87, at the Royal Marsden Hospital. There she introduced the new techniques of tissue typing (which provided the basis on which transplant surgery techniques were based) and cytogenetics (the direct examination of chromosomes). Earlier, in the immediate postwar years, she made a substantial contribution at University College London.

An only child, Sylvia Dorothy Corben, as she was known before marriage, qualified in medicine with distinction at University College London in 1945. She was clearly destined for a research career and joined Dr Rob Race at the Lister Institute, where he established the MRC Blood Group Unit. His group was instrumental in demonstrating that the ABO and rhesus blood groups, although of

vital clinical significance, were not unique, but rather that the red cell membranes carried many different genetically determined systems which could be detected by immunological methods. Lawler was responsible for the study of normal families and of families with inherited abnormalities, which provided a solid genetic foundation for this work.

In 1949 Lawler was invited by L. S. Penrose to join the Galton Laboratory at University College London, the first department of human genetics in the world. At this time most studies were based on quantitative characters such as height, or inherited diseases of variable manifestation. Penrose appreciated the advantage of inherited characters such as 'blood' groups which could be exactly defined experimentally and which were uninfluenced by the environment.

He was himself involved in developing mathematical methods by which the order of genes on the chromosomes could be deduced: the combination of their skills, theoretical and serological, led to the first description of an auto-



somal linkage group in man. Lawler worked with James Renwick, who joined the group, and their findings on genetic linkages formed the basis of what was later to become popularly known as the Human Genome Project.

In 1960 she moved to the Institute of Cancer Research, where she worked hard to establish close scientific links between the Royal Marsden Hospital and the institute.

Her interests in the genetics of malignancy were wide, including such diverse potentially pre-malignant conditions as myelodysplasia (an abnormality of the bone marrow) and molar pregnancy (an abnormality of the placenta which can lead to malignant tumour).

As head of a department which combined immunogenetics and cytogenetics, she developed the scientific basis for the Royal Marsden Hospital's pioneering work with bone marrow transplants, recognising early on the essential part these sciences have in this courageous treatment for leukaemia and other haematologic conditions.

She was regarded with affection by her staff, in whom she took a personal interest. Her extensive knowledge and international reputation attracted numerous overseas visitors to her department and there are many today in Britain and around the world whose medical work owes much to her encouragement.

She was a founder member (and later Fellow) of the Royal College of Pathologists and was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. Her major contributions to all six international workshops on chromosomes in leukaemia were evidence of her determination to discover the significance of acquired chromosomal abnormalities in this disease.

On her retirement she was appointed Emeritus Professor of Human Genetics at the Institute of Cancer Research and she continued to contribute both to collaborative studies of the long-term survivors of leukaemia, and to efforts to improve the diagnosis and treatment of women with trophoblastic tumours.

Her marriage to Laurie Lawler was dissolved in 1976 and she married Professor Kenneth Bagshaw in 1977. She is survived by her husband and a son by her first marriage.

WILFRED FAIRCLOUGH

Wilfred Fairclough, painter-etcher and watercolourist, died on January 8 aged 88. He was born on June 13, 1907.



Wilfred Fairclough's Venice Light Music

WILFRED FAIRCLOUGH lived for his work and only ceased etching in the year of his death, an extraordinary demonstration of his stamina and application. He exhibited his etchings as a member of the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers (formerly Painter-Etchers & Engravers) for more than sixty years. Annually, and as late as last summer, whole editions of his prints sold out at the Royal Academy during the private views, an indication of the regard in which his followers held him.

Starting life with no advantages, Wilfred Fairclough was born in the Lancashire town of Blackburn, where he left school at 14 to work in a mill. After the mill failed, he trained as an audit clerk in a local accountancy firm, while attending evening classes at the Blackburn School of Arts and Crafts. He performed well in his day job but determined to pursue his interest in art by going in for the Board of Education's drawing examination, which he passed in 1930. That same year he was appointed to a part-time teaching job at the Blackburn School of Arts and Crafts.

From there through his own dogged determination, encouraged by his future wife Joan Vernon Cryer who had come to the same school as a student-teacher, he managed to gain entry to the Royal College of Arts' Engraving School. There he excelled, completing the graduate course in 1934 and being elected an Associate of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers & Engravers at the early age of 26. Even more to the point, he was at the same time awarded the society's Rome scholarship.

Thus began a lifetime love affair with Italy, first with Rome and later with Venice. His watercolours and prints began to show an increasing

interest in figures, often displaying wit and keen observation in their execution.

A career in teaching followed his return to England. Fairclough obtained part-time work at Kingston School of Art and at the North London Polytechnic as a drawing instructor. He continued to produce prints of great sensitivity and power, gaining commissions and exhibiting regularly at the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers and at the Royal Academy.

In 1951 he won the Leverhulme Research award, which enabled him to visit Italy for the first time since his tenure of the Rome scholarship — Venice providing him with particular inspiration.

He returned from this sabbatical to become Principal of the Kingston College of Art. With the subsequent changes in art education, he spent his last two teaching years as assistant director of Kingston Polytechnic and head of the division of design from 1970 to 1972.

There then followed prob-

ably his most productive period as an artist. Having produced almost 80 etchings in the period up to 1972, he nearly doubled that number in the last two decades of his life, with the quality constantly improving. His subjects were both landscapes and figurative compositions, etched in copper and printed on paper in his own hand.

In watercolours, one of his most important projects was "Recording Britain", a scheme organised by the Pilgrim Trust. For this he carried out nearly 60 watercolours of Britain, particularly concentrating on the Peterborough area during the Second World War. These are now deposited in a variety of collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum. Other works are in collections at the British Museum, the Ashmolean Museum and the Arts Council. He became an Associate of the Royal Watercolour Society in 1961 and a Fellow in 1968.

Wilfred Fairclough is survived by his wife Ann and a son and a daughter.

PERSONAL COLUMN

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ROBERT BURNS

(BY TELEGRAPH.)

Yesterday afternoon a statue of Robert Burns, subscribed for by the working classes of Scotland, and erected in one of the principal squares of Glasgow, was unveiled by Lord Houghton. The event awakened great enthusiasm throughout the country, and advantage was taken of the occasion for a grand demonstration in honour of the memory of Scotland's greatest bard. There was a great trades procession, which marched through the streets accompanied by instrumental bands playing appropriate music. The city was crowded with visitors, the greatest contingent being from Ayrshire, Burns' native county, and in Glasgow and the neighbouring towns a general holiday was observed.

Lord HOUGHTON said he was commissioned by the Lord Provost and the committee of the subscribers to that national memorial to unveil the statue of Robert Burns. They would bear in the report of that committee under what interesting and honourable circumstances it was raised and presented. The few words he had to say would relate to the meaning and importance of that ceremony. Before the use of books, the erection of images of good and great men in stone or metal was

ON THIS DAY

January 26, 1877

It is a great tribute to a man when a city observes a holiday in his memory. There will be festive gatherings around this statue on July 21, the day of Robert Burns' death in 1796

the only means by which their personality, and in a great degree the memory of their deeds and characters, could be preserved. In this custom and art the ancient Greeks and the Romans, whose dominion stretched into Scotland itself, were most noted and successful, and thus it was that we were more familiar with the names and characters of illustrious men who lived in these far times than we were with those of many who in more recent periods had equally guided the destinies of the world and the thoughts of men. Nor after the birth of modern literature was this method of linking together the minds and generations of men without a signal effect. Even now, when literature had become popular, where a wide and generous edu-

cation had enabled every class to learn the story of the past and the circumstances of the lives of statesmen, warriors, artists, inventors, and poets and other men of letters, they did not the least desire to look upon the all but living representations of what they were when upon earth, and to clothe them with their admiration, reverence and love. To those present, the figure he was about to reveal would be nothing new or strange. It would be the recognition of a friend of their childhood. From him they would learn a lesson hardly taught by the images of the leaders of armies or rulers of nations, yet one of which Scotland might well be proud: for through his difficult, and may be, faulty life, he never lost the mainy endurance, the simplicity of manners, the spirit of fraternity she ever taught to her sons, and which had enabled them to go forth conquering, and still to conquer, in the battle of material life, in the conflicts of intelligence and skill, and to spread the farthest confines of our earth the name and fame of Robert Burns.

NEWS

Primary school results condemned

School test results showing that more than half of all 11-year-olds are not up to standard in English and mathematics provoked a storm over primary school teaching yesterday. Tony Blair branded the results appalling. John Major described them as disappointing and education experts demanded a return to more traditional teaching methods. Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, conceded that the standards of attainment were not good enough... Pages 1, 6, 7

Publisher drops Ian Smith memoirs

The long-awaited memoirs of Ian Smith, Rhodesia's last Prime Minister, have been dropped by HarperCollins because he insisted on describing his successor, Robert Mugabe and his guerilla army, as terrorists. Mr Smith is to offer The Great Betrayal to other London publishing houses... Page 1

Winter returns

Heavy snow and freezing temperatures disrupted air, rail and road traffic across Britain. The London weather centre said the wintry conditions would continue into next week... Page 1

Today given out

Cricket is to bounce Radio 4's Today from the early morning airwaves next month. Live coverage of the World Cup matches in India will replace the programme on Long Wave... Page 1

Major mends fences

The two Serbs who were so prominent in prolonging the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina are being shunned by all Nato commanders implementing the Dayton peace accord... Page 10

Unlawful killing

A Nigerian asylum seeker who died after a struggle with police as he was arrested was unlawfully killed, an inquest jury unanimously decided... Page 3

Policeman jailed

A former police sergeant with an exemplary 24-year career was jailed for seven years for seeking a £30,000 bribe to help to "nobble" an Old Bailey jury... Page 3

Brock shock

Farmers want to resume culling badgers because the population has risen. MPs are to debate new legislation extending wild animals' protection... Page 4

Jew ostracised over divorce

Moses David, of northwest London, a unemployed former computer analyst, has become the first man in Britain to be officially ostracised by the Jewish community over his refusal to divorce his wife. The sanction, delivered by the Federation of Synagogues Beth Din, a Jewish court, prohibits Orthodox Jews from eating, drinking or sitting within six feet of him... Page 1

Garden of Eden

The Eden Project, a £105 million scheme for a kilometre-long artificial world containing rain forests, subtropical gardens and a desert, is being planned for a Cornish valley... Page 5

Hillary's high noon

The media will be out in force for an unprecedented sight - America's proud First Lady arriving under subpoena at a Washington federal courthouse to testify about Whitewater... Page 9

Bosnia cold shoulder

The two Serbs who were so prominent in prolonging the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina are being shunned by all Nato commanders implementing the Dayton peace accord... Page 10

Kremlin appointment

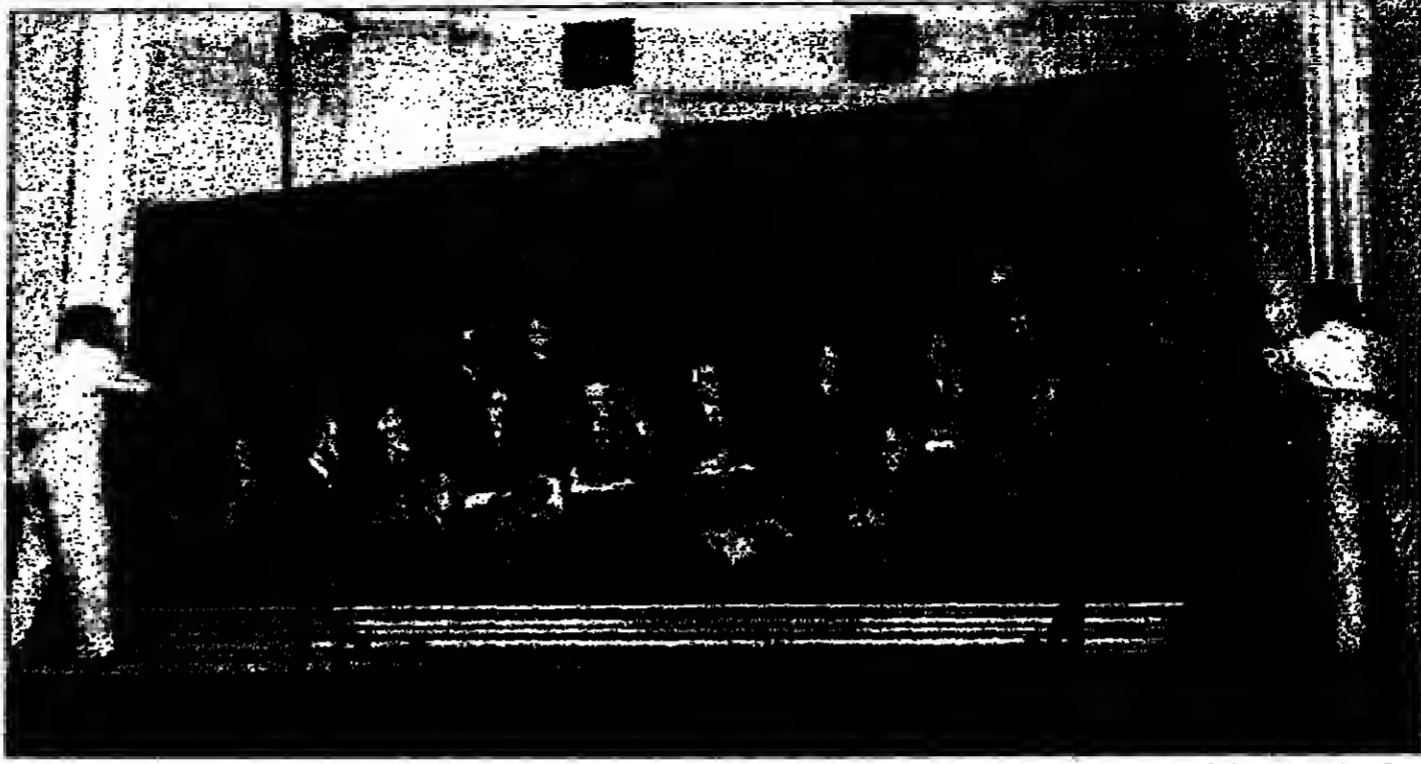
A controversial industrialist was appointed to head Russia's economic policy, renewing fears about the Kremlin's commitment to economic reform... Page 11

Miracle man

Pilot Baba, a Hindu holy man, crawled unsteadily out of the ground four days after being "buried alive" and took his first breath for 96 hours... Page 12

Conservative dress

President Jiang Zemin of China is moving his country away from reform - and has changed his Western lounge suit for a traditional Mao suit... Page 13



A painting of the Cabinet of Hendrick Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid, who is seen standing, second right, being removed from the South African Parliament building in Cape Town yesterday. It will be replaced by a UN anti-apartheid exhibition

BUSINESS

Electricity: The industry is considering spending several million pounds a year on an extensive advertising campaign to spruce up its image... Page 21

Belling scandal: The disgraced solicitor at the centre of the Belling pension fund affair was jailed for nine years... Page 21

Investor: Kevin Leech, who put £50,000 into ML Laboratories in 1987, cashed in £55 million of shares. His remaining 54 per cent personal stake in the company is valued at £353 million... Page 21

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index fell 24.0 points to 3734.2. Sterling's trade-weighted index was unchanged at \$3.1 after a rise from \$1.530 to \$1.548 but a fall from DM2.2397 to DM2.2369... Page 24

SPORT

Tennis: Monica Seles will meet Anke Huber in the women's singles final at the Australian Open. Seles beat Chanda Rubin in the semi-final after being 5-2 down in the final set... Page 40

Football: Faustino Asprilla, the Colombia striker, was set to sign for Newcastle United from Parma in a £7 million deal... Page 40

Boxing: The application by Joe Bugner, the former British heavyweight champion, to challenge for the Commonwealth championship has been rejected. He has had only one bout in eight years... Page 40

Hockey: Great Britain took a big step towards the Olympics when Calum Giles scored against Holland two minutes before the end to earn a 2-2 draw... Page 36

ARTS

Paves for a record: Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's Cats passes another milestone of Monday when it becomes the longest-running musical in history... Page 29

Four of destiny: The Emerson String Quartet has opened its cycle of all the Beethoven quartets in stunning style at the Queen Elizabeth Hall... Page 29

A star is born? Reviewing Scottish Opera's La Traviata, Rodney Milnes hails the emergence of Claire Rutter as a "huge gifted young soprano"... Page 29

Pop on Friday: David Sinclair on the sudden rise to international fame of the Kentucky-born singer Joan Osborne; Caitlin Moran on the weird "post-rock" music of Toronto, from Chicago... Pages 30, 31

EDUCATION

Beyond slogans: Denis MacShane on the real education issues behind the Harman affair - and why English children lag behind their continental peers... Page 33

Divine haute couture: In an outstanding week of Paris collections, few moments were as unforgettable as the Chanel show. Skirts either skimmed the knee or fell to the floor. Jackets held the body's line. Everything fitted like a glove. Iain R. Webb reports... Page 14

THE FUTURE

The state of the State of the Union is not good. Our problem is not the state of the country, it is the ghostly rite itself. We can't decide whether it's the political equivalent of Oscar Night or the godchild of those old Soviet party conferences in which unanimity ("all rise... stormy applause") was so utterly mechanical and grim. The event is entirely staged, contrived with a view to its media coverage and the imagery it projects... The Washington Post

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TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

BARGAIN BREAKS Pick up our passport to Europe for details of special offer breaks at 175 hotels

FOOD AND DRINK Frances Bissell's winter soups and salads; Jane MacQuitty on burgundy for novices

TOMORROW

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THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,074

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-27 indicating starting positions for clues.

- ACROSS: 1 Last month Irish town almost finished in sporting event (9); 2 Late time to say one's piece (5); 3 Some bear the name of Clay (7); 4 Part of book - a religious work showing historical scenes (7); 5 In general, succeeded in top gear (8); 6 A ruler provided a site for mausoleum out East (4); 7 Career that leads to extremely advantageous retirement (4); 8 Not insane, not a liar, not normal (5); 9 Warship, having left from River Plate, at sea (6); 10 Understood address accommodates one (5); 11 Venus de Milo is in one piece, according to 'arry (7)
- DOWN: 1 Ideal partner met aboard, possibly (9); 2 Chap in charge beginning to reprimand soldier, part of palace guard? (5); 3 Artist accepting a husband from Pacific island (2); 4 No fellow for mixing? (4,4); 5 Protection for someone eating game with people (6); 6 Piece moved up to take minor piece (6); 7 Cricket team's attractive member (4); 8 Tax - it's featured in article (5); 9 Ger ride of daie - behave tyrannically, heartlessly (9); 10 Article Lancelot smashed without warning (5,2,4); 11 Manage to get away with kidnap (5,3); 12 Richard Murphy, it's said, is a despot (5); 13 Local worker has in stop carrying weapon (6); 14 Blind summit - stop sign should be put up! (6)

Solution to Puzzle No 20,073

Grid solution for puzzle No 20,073 with words: SIGNPOST, WHIMSY, INVIGORATE, SING, FURNITURE, READER, EKS, RGEI, NAVY, NORMAN, HIDALGO, REBUSE.

TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest report by Roger Handberg, 24 hours a day, see the Forecast on the weather page. For the latest report by Roger Handberg, 24 hours a day, see the Forecast on the weather page.

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest of the AA's roadwatch reports 24 hours a day, see the AA Roadwatch on the weather page.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Table showing highest and lowest temperatures for various locations in the UK.

FORECAST

General: winds will bring bitterly cold weather to most of Britain. Over most of England and Wales, temperatures will remain below freezing throughout with a penetrating northeasterly wind.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table showing weather conditions around Britain yesterday.

ABROAD

Table showing weather conditions in various international locations.

FORECAST

SW England: a little sunshine and a few snow flurries. Wind northeasterly fresh. Max -1C (30F).

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table showing weather conditions around Britain yesterday.

ABROAD

Table showing weather conditions in various international locations.

FORECAST

Channel Isles, Orkney, Shetland, N Ireland: bright at times, some sleet or snow showers. Wind northeasterly. Max 2C (36F).

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table showing weather conditions around Britain yesterday.

ABROAD

Table showing weather conditions in various international locations.

Preview: A Tony Hancock classic is revived with a new voice. Paul Merton in Galton and Simpson's... Twelve Angry Men (8.30pm). Review: Lyne Truss finds ITV's new police series strong on formula but short on personality... Page 39

Anglo-Irish Angst

Elections will eventually determine Northern Ireland's future. The sooner the people of the Province have a chance to speak the better... Page 17

German gloom

Germany is living off past success, and so amount of market rigging will avoid the need for painful economic readjustments... Page 17

Trumps for all

Our new bridge competition will add to the gaiety of nations, the revenues of the National Trust, and the profits of those who dare to bid up to the limits of their hands, and even beyond... Page 17

PETER STOTHARD

Today is the tenth anniversary of our first full day at Wapping. Now, the office of The Times seems a perfectly plausible place for a newspaper to be, but a decade ago it did not... Page 14

BERNARD LEVIN

Which? - the splendid, ironclad, glorious monthly magazine which tells us which saucapan to buy, and which motorcar not to buy (to the fury of the lesser saucapan-makers and the lesser motor car makers) - is on the march against the selectors... Page 16

PETER RIDDELL

The slight recovery in the Tories' rating should be greeted with only half a cheer in Conservative Central Office. There has been no sign of any reduction in the high level of public dissatisfaction with the Government... Page 8

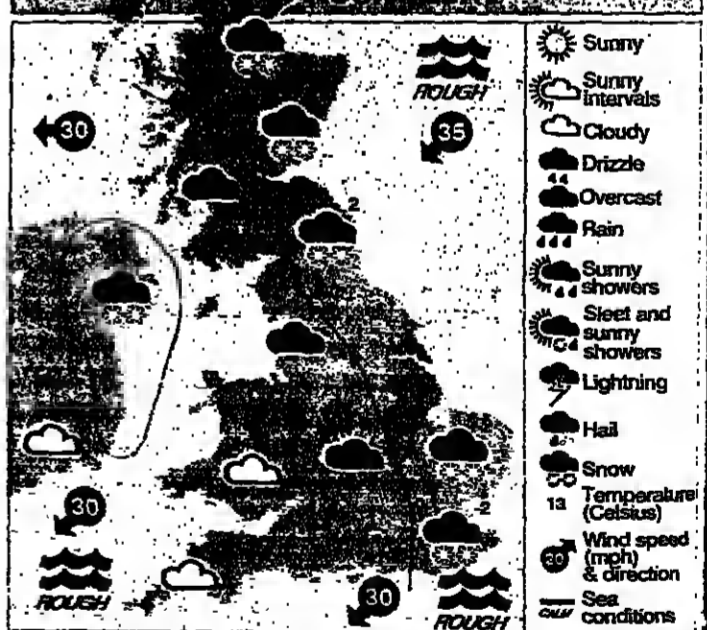
DEBATES

RAB Leary, VC, wing commander; Professor Sylvia Lawler, geneticist; Dr Robert Weir, Chief Medical Officer, Northern Ireland, 1978-86; Wilfred Fairclough, watercolourist... Page 19

SELECTIVE SCHOOLS; RUBICS; DIALYSIS; GAME SHOOTING

Selective schools; rubics; dialysis; game shooting... Page 17

CHANGES TO THE CHART BELOW FROM NOON: HIGH B WILL DRIFT NE ACROSS ISLAND AND THEN E TO BECOME ABSORBED IN HIGH R; LOW J WILL DRIFT N WITH LITTLE CHANGE



CHANGES TO THE CHART BELOW FROM NOON: HIGH B WILL DRIFT NE ACROSS ISLAND AND THEN E TO BECOME ABSORBED IN HIGH R; LOW J WILL DRIFT N WITH LITTLE CHANGE

Table showing weather conditions for various locations in the UK.

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Table showing weather conditions for various international locations.

Advertisement for Defiant Maxv seco, featuring a large image of a person and text: 'Defiant Maxv seco', 'Inside your 8-section Times', 'New case', 'Britain freeze', 'USE THE LIGHTS OUT'.